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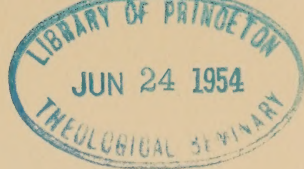






THE ALL-PRESENT GOD





# THE ALL-PRESENT GOD

## A STUDY in ST. AUGUSTINE

by

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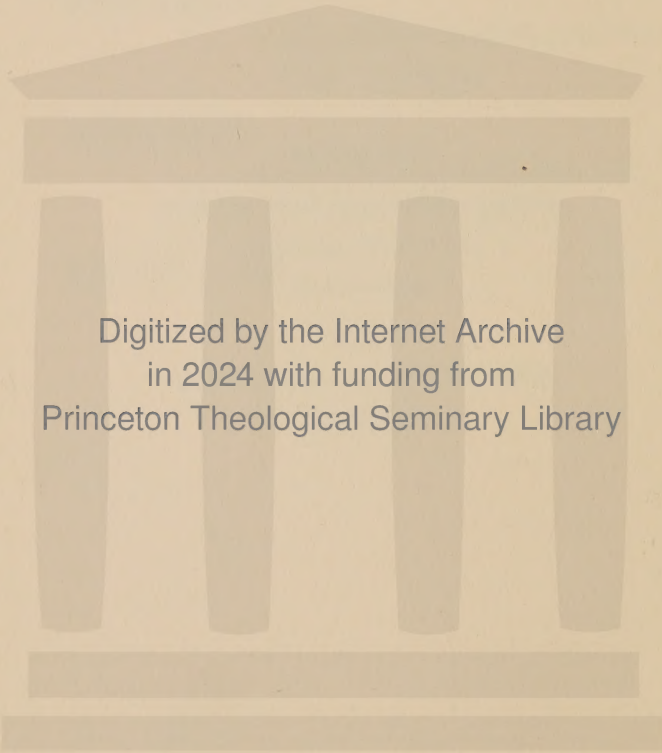


*Genitoribus*

*Annum quinquagesimum quintum  
vitae matrimonialis  
expleantibus*

*Filius*

*quina ab initio sacerdotio lustra  
celebrans*



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## PREFACE

The name of St. Augustine is undoubtedly the most outstanding in the annals of the patristic age. He towers above all the Fathers who have preceded him, and casts a shadow upon all who have come after. Among them all he reigns supreme not only in the domain of theology but in philosophy as well. This universal Doctor of the Church stands in the middle of the patristic era like an immense reservoir, nourishing itself on many rivulets. He gathered from the Fathers who preceded him the living waters of doctrine, and processed them by his own spirit and genius, only to release them in a swollen and rich stream to subsequent generations. St. Augustine drank deeply from the fountainhead of Sacred Scripture. He garnered the theological teaching of the Church from Irenaeus to Ambrose, developed it during the schismatical and heretical strifes of his period, enriched it by his comprehensive genius, formed it into a comprehensive whole, and bequeathed it to mankind.

In universality, depth, and comprehensiveness of doctrine Augustine has no peer among the Fathers, and hence his unique position as a vast storehouse of theological lore for many centuries. Indeed, the influence of this genius was detrimental to a progressive development of theology, as that of Newton has been to the gradual progress of the science of physics. For the Fathers of the remaining period of the patristic age, living under the spell of his overwhelming accomplishments, were engaged more in digesting by piecemeal the many doctrines and problems contained in his voluminous works than in advancing theological and philosophical knowledge.

The influence of St. Augustine, however, is not to be limited to the patristic age. It extends with equal, if not greater, measure to the pre-scholastic and scholastic periods. There is no age for

which St. Augustine does not live. And because our system of theology as we possess it today is so dependent upon the attainments of the patristic and scholastic ages, it must be acknowledged that Augustinian influence has penetrated the whole mass of our theology. The contents of his religious, theological, ascetical, and, to some extent, philosophical works, have entered into the warp and woof of the Christian system of thought. The theologian, the learned and the ordinary Christian people think with the thoughts, and speak in the language, of the great luminary of the western world. In a word, outside of the inspired authors themselves, no religious writer has exerted such an impact upon Christian mentality as St. Augustine has.

So it is with the doctrine which constitutes the subject of the present treatise; namely, the ubiquitous presence of God. The divine omnipresence is explicitly referred to in many passages of Sacred Scripture and is implicitly contained in other texts and teachings of the inspired books. In the writings of the early Fathers this same doctrine is found; not only is the fact of God's ubiquitous presence emphasized for religious purposes, but the mode also of that presence is made the object of fragmentary and casual studies. No Father, however, alludes to it more frequently, or expatiates upon it more comprehensively, or inculcates it more zealously, or feels its importance in religious life more earnestly than does St. Augustine. It was he who, more than any other Father, realized the many potentialities and implications of this doctrine in relation to other doctrines concerning God and the universe. It constitutes the pivotal point in determining the relation of the universe to God, whether the universe is one with God, or is distinct from God but dependent upon Him, or whether it is so distinct and separate as to be entirely independent of Him.

It fell to the lot of St. Augustine to give a solid and ample philosophical foundation to the inherited scriptural and patristic doctrine on the manner of the divine presence in the universe. To be sure, the generation of Greek Fathers antecedent to St. Augustine were Platonists, and in order to give Christian doctrine intelligible expression, unity, coherence, and confirmation they formed a background for Christian thought from Platonic phi-



losophy. But Augustine, in many ways, outdistances his predecessors. Not only does he introduce, on as great a scale as any one before him, philosophical thought to render revealed truth in general intelligible, but he also provides a Neoplatonic cosmological basis for the particular doctrine of the presence of God. He has taken up and developed the philosophical teaching on the modes of presence proper to various categories of beings, and through it has attained his principal aim, viz., to elucidate the manner of the divine presence.

The hierarchy of presences—the mode proper to corporeal beings, then that proper to spiritual substances, and finally that of the supreme Spirit—became an established doctrine chiefly through the writings of St. Augustine. This doctrine of the various modes of presence became the heritage not only of the Fathers who follow closely in the footsteps of the Bishop of Hippo, but also of the more philosophically inclined and more advanced Schoolmen. Even if the expressions which they use and the pattern or formula according to which they all explain the omnipresence of God are literally of much later origin, the ideas are basically patristic and specifically Augustinian. Viewing such a doctrine as the presence of God in Scripture, in the teaching of the Fathers and in the writings of the Schoolmen allows us to perceive and evaluate the roles that the Fathers and the Schoolmen played in the development and final crystallization of a doctrine contained simply in Sacred Scripture.

The doctrine of the presence of God in all creation has a wider application and a greater content in the writings of the Fathers and St. Augustine than it does in Scholasticism. It is presented in the patristic age as a doctrine which is inseparable from, and correlated to, many other doctrines of primary import. In the more systematic and speculative scholastic period these same doctrines were treated separately from the doctrine of the divine presence and not correlated to it. Thus, having conceived of God's presence primarily as operative, dynamic, the Fathers associate or identify this presence of God with all of His activities concerning the universe. To them divine omnipresence is divine action, or at least connotes that divine operation which creates the universe, sustains it in existence, and concurs with its motions

and actions. Hence the doctrine of the Fathers and St. Augustine on the ubiquity of God does not limit itself, as will be evident from this treatise, to the mere presence of God in the universe and in creatures, but extends equally as well to the work of creation, conservation, and concursus in the world.

It is the purpose of this work to investigate the mind of St. Augustine, primarily from his own works and secondarily from other works which had an influence upon him, in order to determine how he conceived God's presence in the universe, and how he associated that divine presence with the other divine activities concerning the same universe. In this manner Augustine's contribution to the theology of the divine presence and divine operations will be established. This doctrine, in the light of the writings of St. Augustine, is scriptural and traditional, theological and philosophical. Consequently all of these sources and their corresponding methods must play respective roles in the investigation.

It must be remembered that the spiritual and ascetical value of the doctrine under consideration was uppermost in the mind of St. Augustine. He was principally a practical theologian and a pastor of souls seeking their good by raising them to God. While his efforts were directed toward the sanctification of souls, Augustine did not rest there. He realized that in order to move the will efficaciously with the hope of some lasting effect, a deeper understanding of religious truths by instruction and elucidation had to be offered. Hence the Doctor of the Church delved also into the theoretical and speculative aspects of a doctrine, plumbing at times its philosophical and theological depths. And thus was formed a vast and magnificent structure of theology, built upon a firm foundation of revelation and reason, constructed of the materials of Scripture and tradition, cemented by the love of God and neighbor, and surmounted by towers pointing to heaven, to God—the goal of all of St. Augustine's writings and labors.

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## CHAPTER I

### SOURCES

IN *De Trinitate*, his profoundest treatise, St. Augustine encompasses in a single passage the threefold source from which he has drawn his doctrine.<sup>1</sup> These sources are: 1. The authority of what he calls the elders or predecessors, which embraces the whole line of antecedent Fathers and Church writers, and the incumbent Bishops of Rome; for against heretics and schismatics he appeals to both the Fathers<sup>2</sup> and the Roman Bishops.<sup>3</sup> 2. The testimony of the Scriptures, with which his writings are replete. 3. The use and enlightenment of reason. The use of these sources and the method of theology corresponding to them are not proper to the work *De Trinitate*, upon the composition of which so many years of St. Augustine's life were employed, but are common to all the rest of his works.

Indeed, the Bishop of Hippo must be considered fortunate in that he was able to strike a proper proportion in the use of these sources. As a consequence of establishing a proper balance between authority and reason, there resulted the right blend of positive and speculative theology. These ingredients are not always found in the same proportions in the writings of the Fathers and

<sup>1</sup> *De Trinit.*, IV, 6, 10 (PL 42, 895): "Ego autem quas reddidi, vel ex Ecclesiae auctoritate a maioribus traditas, vel ex divinarum testimonio Scripturarum, vel ex ratione numerorum similitudinumque collegi."

<sup>2</sup> Cf., e.g., *Contra Jul.*, 2, 10, 33 f. (PL 44, 696 ff.) where he enumerates many Fathers in support of his doctrine against the Pelagians denying the existence of original sin.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. J. Chapman, *Studies on the Early Papacy* (London: 1928), pp. 133 ff.; P. Battifol, *Le Catholicisme de Saint Augustin* (4 ed.; Paris: 1929), pp. 393 ff.; S. J. Grabowski, "St. Augustine and the Primacy of the Roman Bishops," *Traditio. Studies in Ancient and Medieval History, Thought, and Religion*, IV (1946), pp. 111 ff.

ecclesiastical writers. The more conspicuous cases will serve to illustrate this fact: some Fathers, as St. Ambrose <sup>4</sup> and St. Hilary <sup>5</sup> when writing on the Trinity, have relied chiefly upon the authority of the Scriptures, but even more so upon that of the Greek Fathers. On the other hand, Boethius (480–524), “the last of the Romans and first of the scholastics” and one of the “founders of the Middle Ages,” <sup>6</sup> in his *Opusculum de Trinitate* <sup>7</sup> makes exclusive use of reason <sup>8</sup> to study this sublime subject. He commences with the word “Investigabo . . .,” and omits all references to the Scriptures. In this wise, Boethius has influenced the method and speculative character of scholastic theology.<sup>9</sup> Although Boethius is rightly credited with being almost the exclusive transmitter of Aristotelianism to the western world up till the 12th century,<sup>10</sup> nevertheless traces of Augustinian influence can be de-

<sup>4</sup> In his work, *De Fide ad Gratianum Augustum* (ML 16; ed. Ballerini, 6), and in *De Spiritu Sancto ad Gratianum* (ML 16; ed. Ballerini, 4), St. Ambrose follows in the footsteps of the Greek Fathers Athanasius, Basil and Didymus.

<sup>5</sup> In his *De Trinitate*, which work is pointed in the direction of positive theology rather than speculative. Cf. B. Altaner, *Patrologie* (2 Auf.; Freiburg: 1950), p. 316, where he judges of this work thus: “Die von Begeisterung für die von ihm verteidigte Lehre durchglühte Schrift bietet mehr positive als spekulative Theologie.”

<sup>6</sup> Cf. E. K. Rand, *Founders of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1928), pp. 135–80; M. Cappuyns, “Boèce,” *Dict. d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, IX (1939), 348–80; M. Grabmann, *Die theologische Erkenntnis- und Einleitungslehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin auf Grund seiner Schrift in Boethium de Trinitate* (Freiburg in der Schweiz: 1948), pp. 1 ff.; H. R. Patsch, *The Tradition of Boethius. A Study of His Importance in Medieval Culture* (New York: 1935).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. F. H. Stewart—E. K. Rand, *Boethius, The Theological Tractates with an English Translation. The Consolation of Philosophy with the English Translation of J. T.* [1609] (London and New York: 1926).

<sup>8</sup> On the philosophical content of Boethius’ *Tractates* cf. K. Bruder, *Die philosophischen Elemente der Opuscula sacra des Boethius* (Leipzig: 1928); H. J. Brosch, *Der Seinsbegriff bei Boethius* (Innsbruck: 1931).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, V (Freiburg: 1932), p. 259 f.; J. de Ghellinck *Littérature latine au moyen âge depuis les origines jusqu’à la fin de la renaissance carolingienne* (Paris: 1939), p. 18: “un des initiateurs de la spéculation théologique”; M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode* (Freiburg: 1909), I, 163–77; F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 485: “Boethius may be called the principal mediator between Antiquity and the Middle Ages.”

<sup>10</sup> P. Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et l’averroïsme latin* (Louvain: 1911), I, 7: “le véritable introducteur d’Aristote en occident dans le haut moyen âge”; M. de Wulf, *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale* (Louvain—Paris: 1934),

tected in his *Consolatio Philosophiae* in more than one passage.<sup>11</sup>

St. Augustine united both methods and was able to accomplish a masterpiece in joining revelation with reason.<sup>12</sup> In this he has laid down a pattern worthy of imitation by subsequent Fathers who leaned more on the Scriptures and their predecessors than they did upon reason, and for the Schoolmen who in the main betrayed a penchant toward the rational. The judgment of St. Thomas, therefore, that Augustine employed authority and reason (*per auctoritates et rationes*) in formulating his Trinitarian doctrine is correct.<sup>13</sup> The very terms themselves which St. Thomas employs, viz., *auctoritates et rationes* are inherited from St. Augustine.

St. Augustine also indicates his reasons for acceptance of these three sources, namely the Scriptures, the tradition of the Fathers and the use of reason in forming a theology. Christianity is founded upon what the Scriptures contain, hence no Christian can be opposed to them without ceasing to be a Christian. The tradition of the Fathers is identified in the mind of St. Augustine with the Church. The doctrine of tradition or of the Church, therefore, constitutes the *raison d'être* of the Christian religion and is at the same time the criterion of its unity. No one, he says, who is peace-loving can contradict the Church. Finally, it is taken for granted by St. Augustine that reason by right has its place in theology. He says that no one who is of sound mind can be opposed to reason.<sup>14</sup>

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I, 114: "Jusqu'à la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, il est le principal canal per lequel l'aristotélisme se déverse en Occident." See, however, F. Sassen, "Boethius leermeester der Middeleeuwen," *Studia Catholica*, XIV (1938), pp. 98-122, 216-30.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. F. Klinger, *De Boethii consolatione philosophiae* (Berlin: 1929), p. 104; E. J. Silk, "Boethius' *Consolatio Philosophiae* as a Sequel to Augustine's Dialogues and Soliloquies," *The Harvard Theological Review*, XXXII (1939), pp. 19-39.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. M. Schmaus, *Der heilige Kirchenvater Aurelius Augustinus. Fünfzehn Bücher über die Dreieinigkeit, Aus dem Lateinischen übersezt und mit einer Einleitung versehen* (München: 1935), I, XIX (Introduction).

<sup>13</sup> In *Librum Boethii de Trinitate, In Proem., Opuscula Selecta* (Paris: 1884), II, 3. Cf. M. Grabmann, *Die theologische Erkenntnis- und Einleitungslehre des Thomas von Aquin auf Grund seiner Schrift in Boethium de Trinitate* (Freiburg in der Schweiz: 1948), pp. 36 f.

<sup>14</sup> *De Trinit.*, IV, 6, 10 (PL 42, 895): "Contra rationem nemo sobrius, contra Scripturas nemo christianus, contra Ecclesiam nemo pacificus senserit."

## SACRED SCRIPTURE

Of these sources foremost in importance for St. Augustine is Sacred Scripture. This is evident not only from his explicit affirmation that he places the authority of the Scriptures above all other writings,<sup>15</sup> but also from his almost continual use of it. Hardly a page will be found of his writings in which passages of the inspired text do not occur. His keen and unrelenting interest in the Holy Bible is evidenced by his many exegetical writings, embracing most of the Sacred Books, at least in part: to mention only some of the more conspicuous works, the extensive work on the Psalms (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*), his beautiful commentaries on the Gospel and Epistle of St. John (*Tractatus in Ioannis Evangelium et Epistolam*), his three important works on Genesis, which are repeated attempts to arrive at the literal meaning of the first book of the Pentateuch. If the great Doctor of the Church is enthusiastic about Sacred Scripture, speaks of it in superlatives, and expresses his great admiration for it,<sup>16</sup> the reason is that it is the word of God written for the salvation of men,<sup>17</sup> and entrusted to the Church for its support and guidance.<sup>18</sup> Much as his knowledge of the Scriptures is to be admired, one cannot overlook his humble appreciation of his own limitations when he writes that there are many more things in the Scriptures that he does not know than that he knows.<sup>19</sup>

## TRADITION

St. Augustine, likewise, knew, studied, and appealed to tradition. He could not have been unaware of the principle of tradition,

<sup>15</sup> *De civit. Dei*, XIV, 7, 2 (PL 41, 410; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 15, lines 2-3): "Scripturas religionis nostrae, quarum auctoritatem ceteris quibusque litteris antepo-  
nimus. . . ."

<sup>16</sup> Cf. M. Pontet, *L'exégèse de S. Augustin prédicateur* (Paris: 1945), p. 111: ". . . parle de l'Écriture comme d'une merveille."

<sup>17</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 112: "Il loue toujours dans la Bible un Livre écrit pour sauver l'homme. Il voit moins en elle un beau texte qu'un remède puissant, et il assure qu'avant de nous charmer elle veut nous guérir."

<sup>18</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 103, 1, 8 (PL 37, 1341): "hanc auctoritatem primo posuit Deus in Ecclesia sua."

<sup>19</sup> *Ep.* 55, 21, 38 (PL 33, 222, CSEL 34, ed. A. Goldbacher, II, 212, lines 14-15): "etiam in ipsis sanctis Scripturis multo nesciam plura quam sciam."



which has been invoked again and again from the earliest period of the Church and has held such an important place in the arguments against heretics to prove the existence and orthodoxy of a doctrine.<sup>20</sup> If Augustine proved himself to have been an excellent student of Scriptural studies, he also gave sufficient evidence of being well versed in the history of Christian doctrines. His versatile writings attest likewise to a profound knowledge of the philosophical and religious trends of the day. The task of making himself acquainted more thoroughly with the doctrines of tradition had been imposed upon him by the many conflicts in which he was involved as the champion of faith. In order to discern the true from the false he had to take recourse to the past, and had not only restated the teaching of the Fathers as to the existence and orthodoxy of doctrines, but also drew up a catalogue of heresies and religious errors from the beginning of the Church up to his own time.<sup>21</sup>

For example, St. Augustine tells us in his *De Trinitate* that he studied the works of St. Hilary and the Greek Fathers on the Trinity in Latin translation.<sup>22</sup> It was especially against the Donatists and the Pelagians <sup>22a</sup> when he was hard pressed, in the heat of strife, that he undertook to enumerate the Fathers by name, thus invoking their authority in favor of his doctrine. However, in far more cases the reader must be acquainted with the contents of tradition itself, with the teaching of the antecedent Fathers, to be able to recognize that the doctrine which the Bishop expounds, and the phraseology which he employs are not his own, but a traditionally established teaching. It remains for scholarship to discover what developments and progress are to be imputed to the Saint, who on many occasions solemnly protests that his doctrine is the doctrine of tradition. "This," he says, "which was handed down by the Fathers, the universal Church observes."<sup>23</sup> It is to the great credit of this Doctor

<sup>20</sup> G. L. Prestige, *Fathers and Heretics* (London: 1948), p. 6 ff.

<sup>21</sup> *De Haeresibus*. (PL 42, 21-50).

<sup>22</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 10, 11 (PL 42, 931); *ibid.*, III, I (Proem.) (PL 42, 867 f.).

<sup>22a</sup> *Contra Jul.*, II, 10, 33 f. (PL 44, 697). Cf. E. V. McClear, "The Fall of Man and Original Sin in the Theology of Gregor of Nyssa," *Theol. Stud.*, IX (1948), 175: "When St. Augustine was accused of innovation in teaching that Adam's sin passed to his descendants, he appealed to a number of the Western and Eastern Fathers."

<sup>23</sup> *Sermo* 172, 2, 2 (PL 38, 936): "Hoc enim a Patribus traditum universa observat Ecclesia."

of the Church that he amassed and digested, by and large, the heritage of the Greek and Latin Fathers of the first four centuries, enriched it by his own genius, passed an accumulation of theological wealth to the succeeding Fathers, and finally transmitted it, especially through Peter Lombard, to the Middle Ages.<sup>24</sup>

Sacred Scripture and tradition were accepted by Augustine not merely as sources of doctrine,<sup>25</sup> but also as sources of authority.<sup>26</sup> The faith of Christ, by which a man is bound to believe the teaching Christ and without which salvation cannot be attained, is determined by these sources. However, Scripture is not an independent authority, but is confided to the Church, which is its custodian and interpreter.<sup>27</sup> And tradition is identified with the Church or the teaching of the Church. The term "Church" occurs in one of his earliest works *De quantitate animae*, written in 387.<sup>28</sup> However, in his earliest writings which are philosophical works,<sup>29</sup> Augustine was not interested so much at this time in the Church as an institu-

<sup>24</sup> H. Eibl, *Augustin und die Patristik* (München: 1932), p. 23: "Er [Augustin] fasst in erstaunlich reicher Tätigkeit Überliefertes zusammen und findet Neues." M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der katholischen Theologie seit dem Ausgang der Väterzeit* (Breisgau, 1933), pp. 16-17: ". . . Augustinus, in welchem die ganze patristische Entwicklung gipfelt und an welchem daher die spätere scholastische Entwicklung anknüpfen konnte."

<sup>25</sup> E.g., the extent to which Scriptural thought has permeated his works is manifest from his *Confessions* where the Psalms are quoted 400 times and the Epistles of St. Paul about 200 times. Cf. P. Knöll, *Confessionum* (Leipzig: 1898), pp. 334-35; J. M. Campbell-M. R. P. McGuire, *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (New York: 1936), pp. 51-53; J. F. Harvey, *Moral Theology of the Confessions of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1951), p. xx.

<sup>26</sup> *Confess.*, XIII, 15, 16 (PL 32, 851; ed. M. Skutella, 340): "Aut quis nisi Tu, Deus noster, fecisti nobis firmamentum auctoritatis super nos in Scriptura tua divina? *Confess.*, XIII, 29, 44 (PL 32, 864; ed. Skutella, 365): "Ad haec tu dicis mihi, quoniam tu es Deus meus, et dicis voce forti in aure interiore servo tuo, perrumpens meam surditatem et clamans: 'O homo, nempe quod Scriptura mea decit, ego dico.'" *Ibid.*; "O Domine, nonne ista Scriptura tua vera est, quoniam tu verax et veritas edidisti eam?"

<sup>27</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 7, 11 (PL 32, 739; ed. Skutella, 135): ". . . credebam . . . in Scripturis sanctis, quas Ecclesiae tuae catholicae commendaret auctoritas, viam te posuisse salutis humanae, ad eam vitam, quae post hanc mortem futura est."

<sup>28</sup> *De quant. animae*, 33 and 76 (PL 32, 82, and 1077).

<sup>29</sup> We have from this period: *Contra Academicos*, written in 386; *De beata vita*, 387; *De ordine*, 386; *De quantitate animae*, 387-88; *De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum*, 388-89.

tion of grace and salvation, nor in its nature, as he was in its office and authority as a teacher.<sup>30</sup>

### REASON

No less remarkable were Augustine's rational or philosophical contributions to Christian theology. In this he is but the culminating point in a lineage of ecclesiastical writers antedating him by about 200 years. First came the Christian Greek apologists. "Not content with merely rebutting the arguments of the philosophers, they went on to show that this very philosophy, because it had only human reason to rely upon, had either never attained truth, or that the truth it has attained was fragmentary and mingled with numerous errors."<sup>31</sup> St. Justin Martyr, particularly, who was the first more prominent philosopher to embrace the Christian religion, prepared the way for transforming the simple faith of the apostolic Fathers into theological doctrine by proving the reasonableness of the Christian religion, and by showing that philosophy itself attained its highest form in revelation.<sup>32</sup> Tatian also mentions, among the reasons which induced him to become a Christian, the "sweet reasonableness" of the new faith.<sup>33</sup> Athanagoras, called a "Christian philosopher of Athens," teaches that Christians receive truth from divine revelations, but that they also have evidence from reason for their faith. Consequently, their knowledge of God is more perfect than that of the philosophers.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Cf. H. Weinand, *Die Gottesidee als Grundzug der Weltanschauung des hl. Augustinus* (Paderborn: 1910), p. 100.

<sup>31</sup> J. Quasten, *Patrology* (Westminster, Md.: 1950), I, 187.

<sup>32</sup> E.g., Justin, *Apol.*, II, 10: (MG 6, 459) states that the Christian doctrines were more sublime than any human philosophy, because the Christ who appeared for our sakes was the whole fullness of reason, viz., He was Logos, body and soul. And he continues: "Everything that the philosophers and legislators discovered and expressed well, they accomplished through their discovery and contemplation of some part of the Logos. But, since they did not have a full knowledge of the Logos, which is Christ, they often contradicted themselves." Tr. by T. B. Falls, St. Justin Martyr, in *The Fathers of the Church* (New York, 1948), p. 129. Cf. R. Stahler, *Justin Martyr et l'apologétique* (Geneva: 1935); M. Pellegrino, "L'attualità dell' apologetica di S. Giustino," *La Scuola Cattolica*, LXX (1942), 130-40.

<sup>33</sup> *Discourse to the Greeks*, 29 (PG 6, 866 f.).

<sup>34</sup> *Supplication for the Christians*, 7, 9, 10 (PG 6, 904, 908; ed. J. Gaffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten* [Leipzig: 1907], pp. 125, 127). Cf. J. Quasten,

After the way had been paved by the Christian apologists,<sup>35</sup> who came to intellectual grips with paganism, it became the task of Irenaeus of Lugdunum<sup>36</sup> to continue and perfect their work in the development of theology. He gave shape and direction to a theology which evolved out of the contest with the Gnostics. Christian teaching begins to form, in his writings, a systematic theology where the various basic doctrines fall into their places in the perspective of the whole.<sup>37</sup> Hence he has deservedly gained the title of the Father of Christian theology.<sup>38</sup>

The early Fathers, especially the Greeks, were under the influence of Platonic philosophy.<sup>39</sup> Outstanding among them prior to St. Augustine's time was Origen,<sup>40</sup> whose accomplishments in

*op. cit.*, p. 230. See also, H. A. Lucks, *The Philosophy of Athenagoras: Its Sources and Value* (Washington: 1936); M. Pellegrino, *Studi sull'antica apologetica* (Roma: 1947), pp. 65-79.

<sup>35</sup> For the influence of St. Justin upon Irenaeus, cf. F. Loofs, *Theophilus von Antiochien Adv. Marcionem und die andere theologischen Quellen bei Irenaeus* (Leipzig: 1930), pp. 339-74.

<sup>36</sup> For recent studies of his thought in relation to Christian tradition, cf. D. B. Reynnders, "La polémique de S. Irénée," *Rech. de théol. anc. et med.*, VII (1935), 5-27; J. A. Audet, "Orientations théologiques chez S. Irénée," *Traditio*, I (1943), 15-54; R. Forni, *Problemi della tradizione: Ireneo de Lione* (Milano: 1939); M. S. Enslin, "Irenaeus: Mostly Prelegomena," *Harvard Theol. Rev.*, XL (1947), 137-165. For a study of his thought in relation to the philosophical and rhetorical world of his day, cf. R. M. Grant, "Irenaeus and Hellenistic Culture," *The Harvard Theol. Rev.*, XLII (1949), 41-51.

<sup>37</sup> F. R. Montgomery Hitchcock, *Irenaeus of Lugdunum. A Study of His Teaching* (Cambridge: 1914), pp. 19 ff.

<sup>38</sup> J. Quasten, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. K. Krogh-Tønning, *Essays: Platon als Vorläufer des Christentums* (Kempten and Munich: 1906); P. Wendland, *Die hellenistisch-römische Kultur in ihren Beziehungen zu Judentum und Christentum* (Tübingen: 1907); C. Elsee, *Neoplatonism in Relation to Christianity. An Essay* (Cambridge: 1908); C. Sauter, "Der Neoplatonismus, seine Bedeutung für die antike und mittelalt. Philosophie." *Philos. Jahrb.*, XXIII (1910), 183 ff.; C. Bäumker, *Die patristische Philosophie in Kultur der Gegenwart*, ed. by Paul Hinneberg (Leipzig and Berlin: 1932) pp. 264 ff.; R. Arnou, "Platonisme des Pères," *Dict. de Theol. Cath.*, XII, 2258 ff.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. C. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (2 ed.; Oxford: 1913); Fairweather, *Origen and Greek Patristic Theology* (Edinburgh: 1901); J. Denis, *La philosophie d'Origène* (Paris: 1884); F. Prat, *Origène, le théologien et l'exégète* (Paris: 1907); E. de Faye, *Esquisse de la pensée d'Origène* (Paris: 1925); E. de Faye, *Origène: sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensée*, 3 vol. (Paris: 1923-1929); J. Daniélou, *Origène* (Paris: 1948); H. Koch, *Pronoia et paidesis, Etude sur Origène et ses relations avec le platonisme* (Leipzig: 1932); R. Cadiou, *La jeunesse d'Origène, Histoire de l'École d'Alexandrie au début du*



ecclesiastical disciplines are many and varied. Through his researches on the versions of Sacred Scripture and through his commentaries of both Testaments he became the founder of biblical sciences. For the first time, he described the ascent of the soul to God and thus became the originator of ascetical and mystical theology. He was the first to explain, in a methodical way, the Christian mysteries. By forming a general synthesis of theology he succeeded in building a vast theological structure on a far more universal basis than did Irenaeus. His work entitled *Peri Archon* was the first manual of dogmatic theology.<sup>41</sup> The great Alexandrian was able to combine, as being fundamentally one, the revelations of the Old Testament concerning God with the theistic rationalizations of the Greek philosophers.<sup>42</sup>

The Church owes it to Origen, first and foremost, that, whenever Christianity is true to itself, it is a rational faith. The whole educated world is in debt for the preservation of the old Hellenic intellectual culture, which he transformed by his genius into the beginnings of a *philosophia perennis* for Christendom. If there had been no Origen, it may be seriously doubted whether the rising forces of obscurantism might not have blocked the entrance of Christianity against the genius of Augustine; and in that case the occasion might never have arisen for an Anselm or a Thomas Aquinas.<sup>43</sup>

Origen was for theology in the third and fourth centuries what St. Augustine was destined to be for the whole patristic and scho-

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*III siècle* (Paris: 1935); *Id.*, *Introduction au système d'Origène* (Paris: 1932); H. V. Balthasar, "Le mystérion d'Origène," *Recherches de science religieuse*, XXVI (1936), 513-62; XXVII (1937, 38-64; W. Völker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes* (Tübingen: 1931); A. Lieske, *Die Theologie der Logosmystik bei Origenes* (Münster: 1938); L. Grimmelt, *Die Eucharistiefeier etc.*, (Münster: 1942); C. Vagaggini, *Maria nelle opere di Origene* (Rome: 1942); F. Cavallera, "Origène Educateur" *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, XLIV (1943), 61-75; H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit, l'intelligence de l'Écriture chez Origène* (Paris: 1949). For a more extensive survey of bibliography, cf. B. Altaner, *Patrologie* (Freiburg: 1950), pp. 169-71, 173-74.

<sup>41</sup> B. Altaner, *ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>42</sup> J. Daniélou, *Origène* (Paris: 1948), p. 8: "Origène est le premier penseur chrétien qui ait tenté de pousser l'effort de l'intelligence jusqu'à ses extrêmes limites dans l'investigation du mystère."

<sup>43</sup> G. L. Prestige, *Fathers and Heretics* (London: 1948), p. 64.



lastic periods. Influenced by him were Eusebius of Cesarea, Didymus of Alexandria, and Gregory of Neocaesarea, known as Thaumaturgus, through whom the thought of Origen was inherited by the great Cappadocians: St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and St. Gregory of Nyssa. Through Evagrius Ponticus, Origen's theology was transmitted to Cassianus, and from the latter to the monks of the West.<sup>44</sup> To the literary West his works were made known by Rufinus. St. Hilary and Ambrose were acquainted with his exegesis.

However, Origen was not altogether successful in putting philosophy to the service of revealed doctrine, as is evident from the errors to which his teaching gave rise.<sup>45</sup> This occasioned a wave of caution and diffidence in the use of philosophy for the advancement of revelation. With the advent of Augustine a new era was inaugurated in this regard: he threw the doors wide open to philosophy.

If Origen seized upon philosophy "as God's supreme instrument for the rational exposition of the truth,"<sup>46</sup> then it was Augustine, the greatest philosopher among the Fathers,<sup>47</sup> who achieved mastery in the use of this instrument and whose accomplishments in the wedding of faith and reason have proven a perennial blessing for both. Just as he mastered the doctrines of Sacred Scripture and ecclesiastical tradition, so he became well acquainted with the prevalent philosophies and religious tenets. From the Latin classics,<sup>48</sup> besides his rhetorical versatility, he gained his enthusiastic impetus towards the pursuit of philosophy. This was due particularly to the philosophical dialogues of Cicero, which were contained in the latter's work entitled *Hortensius*.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> S. Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano ed Evagrio Pontico sulla carità et contemplazione* (Roma: 1936).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, IX (Florentiae: 1763), 533 A ff.

<sup>46</sup> Prestige, *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>47</sup> M. Grabmann, *Geschichte*, etc., p. 21: "der grösste Philosoph der Väterzeit." H. Pope, *Saint Augustine of Hippo* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 253: "Prince of Philosophers and Theologians."

<sup>48</sup> Cf. H. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris: 1949), p. 18.

<sup>49</sup> *Confess.*, III, 4, 7 (PL 32, 685; ed. Skutella, 41). The influence of this work is important and far-reaching for the life of St. Augustine. Cf. A. Vega, *Obras de San Agustín* (Bibliotheca de autores cristianos; Madrid: 1946), p. 424, n. 20:

However, it is principally with the Greek philosophers that St. Augustine's name is associated. He gives ample evidence of acquaintanceship with their works by explicitly referring to them, but still more by having built their philosophical thoughts into a religious structure. The only work of Aristotle, the philosopher of system and organization, which, it can be said with certainty Augustine read, is the book of Categories.<sup>50</sup> This he probably knew according to the translation of Marius Victorinus.<sup>51</sup> Of Plato, the philosopher of creative originality, he knew directly, comparatively little. He quotes *Timaeus* nine times—once according to the translation of Cicero<sup>52</sup> and eight times according to Chalcidius;<sup>53</sup> there are four citations of *Phaedo*.<sup>54</sup> Other allusions to Plato or quotations from him have been obtained from other sources, chiefly from Cicero.<sup>55</sup>

Above all, St. Augustine was versed in Platonism as it was expounded by the followers of Plato: Plotinus and Porphyry. Already in the year 386 he tells us that he read certain Platonic books in the translation of Marius Victorinus.<sup>56</sup> These *libri Platoniorum* seem certain to be, in part, the *Enneads* of Plotinus.<sup>57</sup> Again, he re-

"Con toda justicia debe ser considerada como él a contecimiento mas importante y transcendental de su vida en este perode. Su influencia fué enorme a sin igual." Concerning Cicero's Hortensius, cf. J. M. Campbell-M. McGuire, *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (New York: 1936), p. 105, note 7; C. Boyer, *Christianisme et Néo-Platonisme dans la formation de saint Augustin* (Paris: 1920), pp. 32 ff.

<sup>50</sup> *Confess.*, IV, 16, 28 (PL 32, 704; ed. Skutella, 73).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. M. Schanz, C. Hosius, G. Kruger, *Die Litteratur des fünften und sechsten Jahrhunderts* (München: 1920), IV, 1, #830; F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 484; F. Bömer, *Der lateinische Neuplatonismus und Neupythagoreismus und Claudius Mamertus in Sprache und Philosophie* (Leipzig: 1936), pp. 87-96.

<sup>52</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XIII, 16, 1 (PL 41, 388; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 575): "nempe Platonis haec verba sunt, sicut ea Cicero in latinum vertit." These words are prefixed to the quoted passage of Plato.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. G. Combès, *Saint Augustin et la culture classique* (Paris: 1927), p. 14, n. 5; F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 484.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Combès, *op. cit.*, p. 14, n. 6.

<sup>55</sup> Combès, *ibid.*, p. 14, n. 7-9.

<sup>56</sup> *Confess.*, VIII, 2, 3 PL 32, 750; ed. Skutella, 154): "legisse me quosdam libros Platoniorum, quos Victorinus quondam rhetor urbis Romae . . . in latinam linguam transtulisset."

<sup>57</sup> Cf. P. Alfarc, *L'évolution intellectuelle de Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1918), pp. 375-76; P. Henry, *Plotin et l'Occident* (Louvain: 1934), pp. 19-21, 46-47,

turns to a perusal of them when he is collecting matter for his *De civitate Dei*, and quotes some passages from them in this masterpiece.<sup>58</sup> Some assume that Augustine made progress in his knowledge of Greek between the first reading and the latter—i.e., between 386 and 415—so that he was able to read the *Enneads* in the original at this latter date;<sup>59</sup> whereas others are of the opinion that he read the work in Latin, but referred, from time to time, to the original Greek text to check up on the translation.<sup>60</sup> Porphyry ranks second to Plotinus in the frequency with which quotations from him occur in Augustine's works.<sup>61</sup> But here also St. Augustine makes use of Latin versions.<sup>62</sup>

An insatiable desire for truth—with its ensuing peace and happiness—is the point of departure of all of St. Augustine's efforts, labors, and quests in the domain of philosophical thought.<sup>63</sup> For Augustine, to seek truth is to seek peace, happiness, and, as he later discovers, to seek everlasting life and God.<sup>64</sup> "O Truth, Truth, how inwardly did even the marrow of my soul pant after Thee." <sup>65</sup> It

210-222; *id.*, "Augustine and Plotinus," *Journal of Theological Studies* XXXVIII (1937), pp. 1-23.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Henry, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-30.

<sup>59</sup> Cf., e.g., S. Salaville, "La connaissance du grec chez saint Augustin," *Échos d'Orient*, XXI (1922), p. 393.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. H. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris: 1949), p. 35; Henry, *op. cit.*, pp. 134, 222.

<sup>61</sup> Combès, *op. cit.*, p. 17, n. 4-9; add also *De Consensu Evang.*, I, 15, 23 (PL 34, 1052). It is possible that in some particular works the influence of Porphyry outweighs that of Plotinus. J. J. O'Meara in his Introduction to Augustine's *Contra Academicos*, in the series of *Ancient Christian Writers*, ed. by J. Quasten and J. C. Plumpe (Westminster, Md.: 1950), p. 23 observes: "Of the two, Porphyry seems to have played, as far as the evidence of this work goes, the more important, and what seems to have been a decisive role."

<sup>62</sup> Cf. *De civ. Dei*, XIX, 23, 1 (PL 41, 650; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 393); *ibid.*, X, 23-26 (PL 41, 247-54; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 436-42); *ibid.*, X, 23, 1 (PL 41, 247; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 436); *ibid.*, XVIII, 23, 1 (PL 41, 579-80; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 285); *ibid.*, XVIII, 23, 2 (PL 41, 580-81; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 286); cf. Marrou, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1943), pp. 140 f.; J. Pastuszka, "Stosunek Św. Augustyna do Filozofji," in S. Bross, *Św. Augustyn* (Poznań: 1930), p. 200; J. Martin, *Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1907), p. 7.

<sup>64</sup> *De mor. Ecc. cath. et Manich.*, I, 24, 47 (PL 32, 1331); *De beata vita*, 35 (PL 32, 976).

<sup>65</sup> *Confess.*, III, 6, 10 (PL 32, 687; ed. Skutella, 43; tr. by E. B. Pusey; [London: 1945]).

is no wonder that the concept of truth permeates all of his philosophy<sup>66</sup> and that he tries to inspire men with the hope of attaining it.<sup>67</sup>

St. Augustine was acquainted with the terminology *theologia naturalis*; in fact, it is he who preserved it from the philosophy of the ancients, and perpetuated it through his *De civitate Dei*. In the first five books of this work, St. Augustine reviews, and attacks the various beliefs and cults of pagan gods as so many illusions. Among the heathen beliefs discussed at length by him are those involved in the *Antiquitates rerum humanarum et divinarum* of the learned Terrentius Varro. This work, which was lost and in part reconstituted from Augustine's *De civitate Dei*,<sup>68</sup> distinguished three sorts of theology (*genera theologiae*): mythical (*mythicon*), political (*politicon*), and physical (*physicon*).<sup>69</sup> Mythical theology was formed by the outpourings of the imagination of the Greek poets concerning their gods. Political theology had as its object the religion, cult, and institutions of the state. Natural theology was founded on insight into the nature of reality and was the outcome of rational investigations of Greek philosophers into the nature of God and religion.<sup>70</sup>

St. Augustine rejects the gods of poets as being born of the imagination and the gods of the state as being a product of expediency. He admits the third category of Greek gods as being representative of religion and necessary for it. For this type of theology he replaced the Greek word *physicos* by the Latin *naturalis*.<sup>71</sup> As

<sup>66</sup> C. Boyer, *L'idée de vérité dans la philosophie de saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1941), p. 9.

<sup>67</sup> *Ep.* 1, 1-2 (PL 33, 61-62; CSEL 34, 2): "Reducendi mihi videntur homines . . . in spem reperiendae veritatis."

<sup>68</sup> Cf. R. Agahd, *De Varronis rerum divinarum libris I, XIV-XVI ab Augustino in libris De civitate Dei IV, VI, VII exscriptis* (Leipsig: 1896).

<sup>69</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VI, 5 (PL 41, 180; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 252); tr. by M. Dods-G. Wilson—J. J. Smith in *Basic Writings of St. Augustine* (New York: 1948), p. 94: "Now what are we to say to this proposition of his [Varro's], namely, that there are three kinds of theology, that is, of the account which is given of the gods; and of these, the one is called mythical, the other physical, and the third civil?"

<sup>70</sup> W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford: 1948), p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> *Aug. De civ. Dei*, VI, 5, 1 (PL 41, 181; ed. Dombart-Kalb I, 252) where he quotes *genus physicon* and *genus mythicon* several times directly from the



Augustine establishes elsewhere, God can be known through the light of reason. Hence, the philosophers of antiquity, unaided by revelation, could have arrived at many truths concerning Him. Wherefore, in the sixth book of the same work, he expounds the doctrine of the one true God of the Christian religion and demonstrates how much in accordance with that exposition were the deepest theological insights of the Greek philosophers. It is to be noted, however, that the points of agreement of the Greek and Roman philosophers with the teaching of the Christian faith, as demonstrated in the sixth book where he analyzes Varro's work, attain their climax when Augustine speaks of Platonism. In the eighth book Augustine asserts that the philosophy of the Platonists is superior to that of M. Terrentius Varro as a means for approaching and attaining the truth.

Although the reading of Cicero's *Hortensius* awakened in the young rhetorician "an incredibly burning desire for an immortality of wisdom,"<sup>72</sup> it was not in human philosophy that his soul was to be satiated. He accepted and adhered to the various tenets and teachings of his day only to disavow them all in due time. He espoused in turn Manichaeism (373-382), the skepticism of the Academics (382-383),<sup>73</sup> and finally the Neoplatonism of Plotinus (386).<sup>74</sup> The latter indeed brought him closer to truth,<sup>75</sup> but in order to attain its fullness he was thrown into the arms of the Church.<sup>76</sup> It may be noted that the order of the last two affiliations of the Saint is not universally accepted. The adherence to Neoplatonism, and then the acceptance of Catholicism is the order commonly accepted,<sup>77</sup> although some scholars maintain that Au-

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text of Terrentius Varro, but he adds: "secundum autem [genus] ut naturale dicatur, jam et consuetudo locutionis admittit."

<sup>72</sup> *Confess.*, III, 4, 7 (PL 32, 685; ed. Skutella, 41; tr. by E. B. Pusey, p. 36).

<sup>73</sup> *Confess.*, V, 10 (PL 32, 715; ed. Skutella, 92); *Contra Acad.*, I, 3 (PL 32, 909).

<sup>74</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 9, and 20 (PL 32, 740, 747; ed. Skutella, 137, 149); *De beata vita*, I, 4 (PL 32, 961).

<sup>75</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 20, 27 (PL 32, 747-48; ed. Skutella, 149-50); *Sermo* 141, 1 (PL 38, 776).

<sup>76</sup> A. Tymczak, *Nauka Św. Augustyna o Wierze* (Przemyśl: 1933), p. 35; W. Stanisławski, *Kościół jako Mistyczne Ciało Chrystusa według Św. Augustyna* (Lublin: 1936), pp. 6 ff.

<sup>77</sup> F. Wörter, *Die Geistesentwicklung des hl. Augustinus* (Paderborn: 1892), p. 57; Gibb and Montgomery, *Confessions* (Cambridge: 1908), p. 51;

gustine returned to the Church of his mother before reading Plotinus and aligning himself with this philosophy.<sup>78</sup> Hence, sheer philosophy was incapable of satiating the deep-rooted desires of the heart of St. Augustine; it had to be aided by revelation and authority.

The history of this inward struggle and search after truth will serve to indicate the relation which evolved between the light of mere reason and the light of revelation. Each has its respective province, but there is a territory which is not without some overlapping. Many vital truths concerning the existence and nature of God, the origin and relation of the universe to God, and the origin and nature of man, lie in the section in which both overlap. In this common domain revelation has deepened and even corrected the efforts of philosophers striving to solve the problems of the intellect of man. These truths of the philosophical order were a deep concern of Aristotle and Plato, who, devoid of revelation, attained much truth but did not develop their conclusions to their full import and maturity. Let us take one example. Through the revelation of the word *Jahveh*, of its meaning and nature to Moses, the very groundwork was laid upon which the whole solid structure of theism or theodicy was erected. It was the starting point for all further speculations, the premise for further deductions. This revelation provided for the mind of man a support in confirming what it had already attained by its innate power, or became a cor-

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such is expressly the opinion of G. Hertling, *Augustin, Der Untergang der antiken Kultur* (Mainz: 1902), p. 45; L. Grandgeorge, *S. Augustin et le Néo-Platonisme* (Paris: 1896), p. 3; A. Hatzfeld, *Saint Augustin* (5me ed.; Paris: 1898), pp. 41-42; J. Martin, *Saint Augustin* (2me ed.; Paris: 1923), p. 16; E. Portalié, "Augustin," *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, I, 2271-72; L. Bertrand, *Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1913), pp. 242-44.

<sup>78</sup> Thus, C. Boyer, *Christianisme et Néo-Platonisme dans la Formation de Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1920), pp. 60 ff.; *id.*, "Philosophie et Théologie chez Saint Augustin," *Revue de Philosophie*, XXX (1930), p. 507. Also P. Alfarcic, *L'évolution intellectuelle de saint Augustin* (Paris: 1918), pp. 379-80 admits that in accordance with the sequence in the *Confessions* Augustine was reconverted to Catholicism before coming in touch with Neoplatonic literature; however Alfarcic disavows the testimony of the *Confessions*. According to M. Straszewski, *Filozofja Św. Augustyna na Tle Epoki* (2 ed.; Lwów: 1922), pp. 104 f., Augustine was already a catechumen, which he intended to remain until he should see his way clear, and during this period the works of Plotinus fell into his hands. So, likewise, J. Campbell-R. McGuire, *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (New York: 1936), p. 6.



rective by helping to recognize the mistaken paths thus far traversed.<sup>79</sup>

Revelation, of course, cannot be independent of words and concepts, in which and with which it must be expressed, but it can be independent, at least to a great extent, from any particular philosophical system. However, in order to grow into a theology, and to attain its full stature, as historical evidence points out, it has leaned on one or the other of the more excelling systems of thought devised by the intellect of man. St. Augustine aligned faith with Platonic thought, especially with its later religious development by the Neoplatonists. St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas built their system in great part, on the philosophical order of Aristotle. In any case, it was the *theologia naturalis*, largely as developed by the Greeks, which served as the foundation for the *theologia supernaturalis* of Christianity.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, progress or development through deductions from the revealed truth necessitates reason or some philosophy.<sup>81</sup>

This process of reasoning employed to establish and explain the truths of divine revelation, is what a modern philosopher calls "theological philosophy."<sup>82</sup> Another writer<sup>83</sup> names St. Augustine for the same reason a "philosophical-minded theologian." Other Fathers and ecclesiastical writers anterior to the time of St. Augustine had made use of reason in forming a doctrine of God, and they had stated, presupposed, or implied the existence of a fundamental agreement between the knowledge acquired by the gift of revelation and that attained by the power of reason. But it was Augustine who was by far the most outstanding and the most conscious exponent of a harmonious combination between the light of revelation and the light of reason for the exposition of doctrine.<sup>84</sup> Faith for him was the starting point to be followed up

<sup>79</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), pp. 38 ff.; C. H. Hart, "Reason and the Great Revelation," *The Catholic University of America Bulletin*, XVII (1950), no. 4, pp. 7 ff.

<sup>80</sup> Werner Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford, 1948), p. 2.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. I. Różycki, *Dogmatyka. Metodologia teologii dogmatycznej* (Kraków: 1947), pp. 387 ff.

<sup>82</sup> John Dewey, *Problems of Men* (New York: 1946), p. 10.

<sup>83</sup> V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee: 1944), p. 203.

<sup>84</sup> F. van Steenbergen, "La Philosophie de S. Augustin," *Revue Néo-Sco-*

by reason.<sup>85</sup> It was he who said, "Understanding is a reward of faith. Therefore seek not to understand that thou mayest believe, but believe that thou mayest understand."<sup>86</sup> And again, speaking of the eternity, equality, and unity of the Trinity, he urges us to try to understand as much as we can, but admonishes us that "we ought to believe before we understand."<sup>87</sup>

Even before his baptism in 387, in his retreat at Cassiciacum, where he was preparing for his entry into the Church, Augustine recognizes that there are two roads leading to the attainment of truth and to the removal of obscurities in the way of it. They are reason and authority.<sup>88</sup> There can be, in the estimation of the youthful Augustine, no conflict between authority and reason, between true philosophy and the true religion of Christ.<sup>89</sup> The

*lastique*, XXXV (1933), 122: "La théologie de S. Augustin est riche de philosophie, non seulement parce qu'il use de notions et de procédés philosophiques dans la définition et l'explication du donné révélé, mais encore parce qu'il intègre des analyses et des recherches philosophiques dans son encyclopédie théologique." Cf. also E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York: 1946), pp. 16 ff.

<sup>85</sup> On the teaching of St. Augustine on the relation of faith to reason, cf. Th. Gangauf, *Verhältnis von Glauben und Wissen nach den Prinzipien des Kirchenlehrers Augustinus* (Augsburg: 1851); A. Hähnel, *Verhältnis des Glauben zum Wissen bei Augustinus* (Chemnitz: 1891); W. Schwenkenbecher, *Augustinus Wort: Fides praecedat intellectum* (Sprottau: 1899); M. Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode* (Freiburg: 1909), I, 125-43; *id.*, "Augustinus Lehre von Glauben und Wissen und ihr Einfluss auf das mittelalterliche Denken," *Aurelius Augustinus. Die Festschrift der Görres-Gesellschaft zum 1500 Todestage des heiligen Augustinus* (Köln: 1930), pp. 87-110; M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster: 1927), pp. 169-90; B. Warfield, "Augustine's Doctrine of Knowledge and Authority," *The Princeton Theological Review*, V (1907), 357-97, 529-78; C. Boyer, "Philosophie et Théologie chez Saint Augustin," *Revue de Philosophie* XXX (1930), 503-18; C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (London: 1944), pp. 400 ff.

<sup>86</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* XXIX, 6 (PL 35, 1630): "Intellectus enim merces est fidei. Ergo noli quaerere intelligere ut credas, sed crede ut intelligas." Cf. also *De lib. arb.*, II, 2, 6 (PL 32, 1243).

<sup>87</sup> *De Trinit.*, VIII, 5, 8 (PL 42, 952).

<sup>88</sup> *De ord.*, II, 9, 27 (PL 32, 1007); *ibid.*, II, 5, 16 (PL 32, 1002): "Duplex enim est via quam sequimur, cum rerum nos obscuritas movet, aut rationem, aut certe auctoritatem." *Ibid.*, II, 9, 26 (PL 32, 1007): "Ad discendum item necessario dupliciter ducimur, auctoritate atque ratione. Tempore auctoritas, re ratio prior est." Cf. B. Warfield, "Augustine's Doctrine of Knowledge and Authority," *The Princeton Theological Review*, V (1907), 357-97; 529-78.

<sup>89</sup> *Contra Acad.*, III, XX, 43 (PL 32, 957): "Nulli autem dubium est gemino

more mature Augustine readjusts somewhat the relation between reason and authority—reason and faith.

The thought and spirit of St. Augustine were caught by his admirer and follower, St. Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109),<sup>90</sup> in his famous formulas: *credo ut intelligam*,<sup>91</sup> and *fides quaerens intellectum*.<sup>92</sup> Not only did St. Anselm scrupulously apply the principles expressed by the formulas to his own works, but since he was a pioneer of the scholastic form and method, he bequeathed one of the most fundamental and all-encompassing rules to the scholastic age. In fact the scholastic method developed itself around the struggle and balance between authority and reason in theology. There were those in the pre-scholastic and scholastic periods for whom authority was the dominant factor and almost the self-sufficient rule. Such was predominantly the case from about the eighth to the eleventh century when anti-dialecticians, mystics, and conservative theologians chose to follow the trodden paths of tradition. There were others who exaggerated the role of philosophy in theology. To these belong Scotus Erigena, Berengarius of Tour, Peter Abelard, and the Latin Averroists of the thirteenth century. Outstanding among those who followed in the tradition of St. Augustine putting reason to the service of revelation and striving to preserve a balance between reason and faith were, besides St. Anselm: Hugo of St. Victor, Robert of Melun, Alexander of Hales, St. Albert the Great, and St. Bonaventure. Although developing a new philosophical trend by applying Aristotelianism to Christian theology, St. Thomas likewise focused attention on the role of reason in sacred theology, and made use of it extensively without prejudice to authority.<sup>93</sup>

pondere nos impelli ad discendum, auctoritatis atque rationis. Mihi autem certum est nusquam prorsus a Christi auctoritate discedere: non enim reperio valentiorum. Quod autem subtilissima ratione persequendum est; ita jam sum affectus, ut quid sit verum, non credendo solum, sed etiam intelligendo apprehendere impatienter desiderem; apud Platonicos me interim quod sacris nostris non repugnet reperturum esse confido." Cf. also *ibid.*, III, XIX, 42 (PL 32, 956); *De ord.*, I, XI, 32 (PL 32, 993 f.).

<sup>90</sup> Cf. St. Anselm, *De divinitatis essentia monologium*, Praemium (PL 158, 143); *Monologium*, Preface, trans. by S. N. Dean (Chicago: 1935), p. 36.

<sup>91</sup> *De fide Trinitatis et de Incarnatione Verbi*, Praefatio (PL 158, 261); and c. II (263); cf. E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 24 ff.

<sup>92</sup> *Proslogion* (PL 158, 225).

<sup>93</sup> Cf. M. Grabmann, "Augustinus Lehre von Glauben und Wissen und ihr

Besides these avowed sources of his religious and philosophic teaching, there are other genetic factors which gave intimacy and personality, conviction and vitality, unction and coloring to the contents of the writings of the Bishop of Hippo. These are not to be overlooked in evaluating his achievements and in understanding the tenor of many pages of his works. These potent influences are his personal experiences and his evaluation of the experiences of mankind. He analyzed and understood the vicissitudes of man in the course of history better than any uninspired mortal. His inner soul and the history of man became open books for Augustine from which he drew truth, lessons, and maxims.

Typical of his own life and experiences, and the lessons he draws out of them, are his *Confessions*, in which he gives abundant evidence of knowing the human heart with its inclinations, struggles, and frailties. In this, his most popular work reprinted so often and translated into so many languages, he has portrayed a soul groping in the darkness of error (from which it was freed by the light of faith) and floundering in the quagmire of sensuality (from which it was extricated by the power of grace). It is a vivid and prayerful story of liberation from the depths of moral degradation and the bondage of sin to the atmosphere of chastity and the freedom of the children of God. Indeed, throughout this work St. Augustine has leaned heavily upon St. Paul.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, by his vivid and original presentation of the struggle of the inner man, by diagnosing the origin of the evils plaguing souls, by pointing out their remedy, by clearly distinguishing the natural and supernatural factors in the life of the soul, St. Augustine must be credited with having made an impressive original contribution to patristic literature.

In this analysis of his own soul, lies for some American psycholo-

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Einfluss auf das mittelalterliche Denken," *Aurelius Augustinus. Die Festschrift der Görres-Gesellschaft zum 1500 Todestage des heiligen Augustinus* (Köln: 1930), pp. 89-90.

<sup>94</sup> It is interesting to note that the *Confessions* which is not *ex professo* a doctrinal work, but a history of personal experiences, is permeated by a multitude of Scriptural texts. The Psalms are quoted 400 times, whereas the Epistles of St. Paul about 200 times. Cf. P. Knöll, *Confessionum* (Leipzig: 1898), pp. 334-35; for St. Paul, cf. J. F. Harvey, *Moral Theology of the Confessions of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1951), pp. 16, 21, 25, 26, 29, 32, 38, 43, 66, 77, 98, 112, 134, 144, 151.



gists a classical example of a discordant personality, or as modern psychiatrists express it, a schizophrenic mentality. Thus, W. James writes:

Let me quote from some typical cases of discordant personality, with melancholy in the form of self-condemnation and sense of sin. St. Augustine's case is a classic example. . . . Augustine's psychological genius has given an account of the trouble of having a divided self which has never been surpassed. . . . There could be no more perfect description of the divided will, when the higher wishes lack just that last acuteness, that touch of explosive intensity, that dynamo-genic quality (to use the slang of the psychologists) that enables them to burst their shell, and to make the irruption efficaciously into life and quell the lower tendencies forever.<sup>95</sup>

Typical of the other factor, viz., the history of the experiences of mankind, is his monumental work, *De civitate Dei*.<sup>96</sup> In it Augustine reviews and analyzes the history of the human race from the standpoint of vice and virtue, religion and irreligion, philosophy and society. This he does using history not as a source from which ethical teaching and theological doctrine are to be drawn, but as a medium of corroboration, clarification and exemplification for the value of Christian ethics and Catholic dogmas as contained in the Scriptures and taught by the Church.<sup>97</sup> As has been pointed out previously, St. Augustine, in the main, acknowledges the validity of the human reason in attaining to some basic truths concerning God and religion. He admits an essential agreement, within

<sup>95</sup> *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: 1907), pp. 172-73; cf. also H. Baker, *The Dignity of Man* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1947), pp. 161 f. C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture* (New York: 1944), pp. 379-80, remarks: "This method of interpretation tends to become more and more purely subjective and esoteric until, in its more recent manifestations, Augustine is depicted as the victim of a diseased psyche, finding, in his devotion to mother Church, compensation for a passion morbidly fixed upon the memory of Monica, his mother."

<sup>96</sup> Cf. V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee: 1945), pp. 248 ff.

<sup>97</sup> A case of such a misinterpretation of the mind of St. Augustine is the following: M. Cohen, *Reason and Nature. An Essay on the Meaning of Scientific Method* (New York: 1931), p. 377: "The attempt to derive theological-ethical values from history begins with Augustine. . . but, without doing injustice to his powerful intellect, we may safely say that the attempt to make the facts of history prove the truth or validity of Christian ethics is convincing only to those who are determined to be convinced beforehand."

the domain common to revelation and reason, between the doctrine of the God of the Scriptures and the God of the more sober philosophers of the Greeks. To be sure, the attainments of the latter in natural theology are rudimentary, incomplete, and mingled with error, compared with the perfection and the purity of the God of revelation and Christian theology.

The immediate occasion for writing *De civitate Dei*,<sup>98</sup> which was started in 413 and completed only in 426, was the fall of Rome in 410. Many devotees of false gods cast the blame for this happening on the Christian religion. In consequence, they blasphemed the true God. Against such charges the Bishop of Hippo undertook the composition of what is perhaps his greatest work.<sup>99</sup> The broad scope of this work is to show the need of religion as a foundation for the state or polity. "No truly good city can be founded or kept going except on the foundation and bond of faith and firm concord."<sup>100</sup> He dramatically portrays two opposing cities.<sup>101</sup> One is the *civitas terrena*, composed of men who are in quest of only temporal goods; the other is a *civitas Dei*, formed of men who are in the pursuit of the things of God.<sup>102</sup> "In his notion of a universal religious society is to be sought the origin of that ideal of a world society which is haunting the minds of so many today."<sup>103</sup> Here, too, there are modern writers who try to detect in the notion of two opposing cities, a sort of dualism which has been borrowed from the Manicheans.<sup>104</sup>

In great part, the reasons for the neglect and disfavor of St.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. *Retract.*, II, 43 (PL 32, 647-48).

<sup>99</sup> St. Augustine himself describes this work as *grande opus*, *Retract.*, II, 43 (PL 32, 648), and as a *magnum opus et arduum*, *De civit. Dei*, I, Praef. (PL 41, 13).

<sup>100</sup> *Ep.* 137, 17 (PL 33, 524; CSEL 44, III, 122).

<sup>101</sup> Cf. S. J. Grabowski, "Sinners and the Mystical Body of Christ according to St. Augustine," *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947), 614-67; IX (1948), 47-85.

<sup>102</sup> Here, too, modern psychology detects a disordant personality; C. N. Cochrane, *op. cit.*, p. 380, expresses its views thus: "Augustine's vision of the two cities, formerly understood as the projection of contemporary political and ecclesiastical issues, becomes in fact a reflection of unresolved tensions within his own soul, the inner history of which is represented as one of incessant turmoil and strife."

<sup>103</sup> E. Gilson in his foreword to the *City of God*, tr. by D. Zema and G. Walsh, *The Fathers of the Church* series, vol. VIII (New York: 1950), XI.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. H. I. Marrou, *L'ambivalence du temps de l'histoire chez Saint Augustin* (Montréal: 1950), pp. 39 f.



Augustine with British<sup>105</sup> and American<sup>106</sup> religious and philosophical writers are to be found in what has been said on the sources of St. Augustine's knowledge and doctrine. American liberal theology maintains that Augustine has failed to form an intelligible and uniform system of religious thought and considers the manifold sources from which he drew as the cause of a congeries of curious doctrines.

The curious combination in all this (in Augustine's doctrine of God and man, sin and grace) of mystical piety, Neoplatonic philosophy, Manichaeism, Christian tradition, strained exegesis, rigorous logic, and glaring inconsistencies born of religious instincts and moral needs, can hardly be matched anywhere else in the history of human thought.<sup>107</sup>

American humanism has denounced St. Augustine for his subordination of reason to the will.

The intellect was not only put in its proper subordinate place but brought under positive suspicion. The way was opened for obscurantism. Man was humbled and his will regenerated, but more or less at the expense of the critical spirit.<sup>108</sup>

Consequently, those who measure the dignity of man by the attainments of reason alone necessarily denounce St. Augustine for his acceptance of faith and revelation as authoritative guides.

Augustine's mystical apprehension of God proved to him, as it were, the futility of seeking a rational comprehension of the absolute. As if to complete the degradation of man's proud cognitive faculty he made the highest knowledge (the awareness of God) as a matter of divine illumination. This kind of knowledge comes to man, if it comes at all, only if God will it; man is the sponge who passively absorbs the revealed vision which God grants him, not the consciously seeking rational agent who attains knowledge by his own efforts at comprehension. . . . He can be comprehended, if at all, only by revealing Him-

<sup>105</sup> Cf. J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei. A Study of St. Augustine's Teaching on the Love of God as a Motive of Christian Life* (London: 1947), Preface, p. V.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture. A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (New York: 1944), pp. 378 f.

<sup>107</sup> A. C. McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York: 1946), II, 98 f.

<sup>108</sup> I. Babbitt, *Democracy and Leadership* (Boston: 1939), p. 177.

self to man. Piety replaces wisdom, faith replaces comprehension, revelation replaces investigation.<sup>109</sup>

The fact is that Augustine had written not only much but also on many and diversified topics, under varied circumstances, developing one point or segment with the omission of its counterparts or correlatives, stressing this or that and neglecting something cognate or involved. Moreover, he was continually in the process of development over many years. The fact that so few changes of opinion or transformations of doctrine are to be noted in his works is to be interpreted as a characteristic of the comprehensive grasp of his tremendous genius. One of the common mistakes made with regard to St. Augustine has been to evaluate his teaching from some one work or series of works, or even from a certain number of passages. To arrive at a thorough and comprehensive knowledge which would give us some assurance of knowing St. Augustine postulates years of serious research. Only then will our judgment carry weight if we have a firm grasp of the various parts of his doctrine, if we perceive their integration and are aware of the circumstances which occasioned the discussion of them.

The fact remains that Augustine—a name “which can never lose its lustre”<sup>110</sup>—has survived in his works, as an ever living and ever influencing genius, for over fifteen centuries. Indeed, his style of writing is appealing, enthralling: “the moving tones, the glowing imagery, the charm of expression, the vigor of dialectic, the splendor of spiritual vision, all combine to form a whole which, viewed from without, impresses the spectator as something unique, like the beauty of a masterpiece of art.”<sup>111</sup> Yet more than this is required to explain his prodigious influence on the mind of man, the ever youthful vitality of his works, the perennial fecundity of his thoughts, the dynamic and fertilizing powers of his philosophy, theology, and religion. Man finds in his writings “an intellectual structure, subtle and rigorous analyses, a warp and woof

<sup>109</sup> H. Baker, *The Dignity of Man* (Cambridge: 1947), p. 162.

<sup>110</sup> F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1950), II, 40.

<sup>111</sup> M. Blondel, “The Latent Resources in St. Augustine’s Thought,” in *A Monument to St. Augustine: Essays on Some Aspects of his Thought written in Commemoration of his 15th Centenary* (2nd ed.; London: 1945), pp. 319–20.

of logic, a perpetual insistence on clarity, and a generally successful effort to achieve such intelligibility as might satisfy a mind possessed of the highest degree of acuteness and perspicacity."<sup>112</sup> But is not the most fundamental reason for the ever renewed influence, for this persistent survival of his thought to be sought in the fact that it is expressive of truth which approaches to, and participates in, the permanence of the eternal Truth for whose attainment all of his philosophy and theology have been written?<sup>113</sup> With perfect truth, he can be called, what Bossuet has called him, the Doctor of Doctors.

<sup>112</sup> M. Blondel, *ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. M. Blondel, "La quinzième centenaire de la mort de saint Augustin (28 Août, 430). L'unité originale et la vie permanente de sa doctrine philosophique," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, XXXVII (1930), 423-69; *id.*, "La fécondité toujours renouvelée de la pensée augustinienne" *Cahiers de la Nouvelle Journée*, XII, Saint Augustin (Paris: 1930); *id.*, "Les ressources latentes de la doctrine augustinienne," *Revue Néo-Scholastique*, XXXII (1930), pp. 261 ff.; H. I. Marrou, *L'ambivalence du temps de l'histoire chez Saint Augustin* (Montréal: 1950), pp. 42 ff.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE IN SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

**P**RELIMINARY to the study of the chief subject of this work, it will be well to investigate briefly the role that each of the sources plays in the theology of St. Augustine, particularly in regard to the concepts of God, His attributes, His presence in all things, and of the relation of the universe with God. In this wise it will become clear what the status of these doctrines was prior to St. Augustine's time and what contributions he has made to their development.

#### SACRED SCRIPTURE AND THE PRESENCE OF GOD

In his work on the *Presence of God*, St. Augustine adduces several brief passages from Sacred Scripture to show that according to its teaching God is everywhere present.<sup>1</sup> Thus he refers to the words of the prophet Jeremias: "I fill heaven and earth."<sup>2</sup> The following words referring to divine wisdom he interprets as a personification of God: "She reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly."<sup>3</sup> From the same book he quotes the words: "The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole earth,"<sup>4</sup> as a scriptural argument for God's ubiquity. And he asserts that the following words of the Psalmist refer to the same Spirit: "Whither shall I go from the Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend into heaven Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art present."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* 187, IV, 14 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 92).

<sup>2</sup> 23, 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Wisd.* 8:1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:7.

<sup>5</sup> *Ps.* 138:7-8.

These texts recur again and again in St. Augustine as scriptural evidence of the divine omnipresence. A glance into the writings of the Fathers who preceded him will amply show that these texts are the common property of the Fathers and that they constitute the standard classical arguments for the omnipresence of God. It is to be observed that in these scriptural passages dealing with the presence of God, that which fills and pervades is the "Spirit of God," a phrase occurring frequently in Sacred Scripture. "The concept of the spirit of God pervades the pages of the Old and New Testaments. We come in contact with the 'spirit of God' in the first verses of the Book of Genesis and we find mention of the 'Spirit' in the last verses of the Book of the Apocalypse."<sup>6</sup> These scriptural passages do not always directly and literally speak of the very person of God, but rather of some attribute of His which is universally manifest in creation. Such too, in particular, is the literal interpretation of the texts which speak of the Spirit as being everywhere present. The Old Testament passages do not speak of the divine Person whom we call the Spirit or the Holy Ghost at least directly.

St. Augustine lays down an exegetical rule, which already obtained in his time, that wherever the term "spirit of the Lord," or "spirit of God," or even simply "spirit" is used, whether in the Old Testament or in the New, it refers, or at least can refer, to the person of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> In this manner he interprets the words of Genesis: ". . . and the spirit of God moved over the waters."<sup>8</sup> He takes it for granted that this is the interpretation of the word "spirit" in the passages adduced above to prove God's ubiquitous presence in the universe. If the divine Spirit is spoken of as everywhere present, then the other two divine Persons, in accordance with his Trinitarian doctrine, are equally and simultaneously present on account of their common and indivisible essence, substance,

<sup>6</sup> A. Benson, *The Spirit of God in the Didactic Books of the Old Testament* (Washington, D.C.: 1949), Introduction, p. VIII.

<sup>7</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 5 (PL 40, 133).

<sup>8</sup> Gen. 1:2; cf. K. Smoroński, "Spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas," *Biblica*, VI (1925), 140-56; M. Gruenthaner, "The Scriptural Doctrine on First Creation," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, IX (1947), 52. S. J. Grabowski, "Spiritus Dei in Gen. 1, 2 according to St. Augustine," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, X (1948), 13-29.



or nature.<sup>9</sup> From this interpretation and argumentation common to the early Fathers and to St. Augustine who follows closely in their foot steps, it would follow, that the Holy Ghost is referred to explicitly in the books of the Old Testament and that His existence as a distinct Person can be proved from those scriptural passages.

However, if a strict literal interpretation is followed, then it must be stated that the phrase "spirit of God"—*ruah Jahveh*—in the Old Testament<sup>10</sup> is a metaphorical expression designating God's power or omnipotence.<sup>11</sup> It is not a power or virtue that is distinct from God to the extent of being, properly speaking, a divine Person or some other separate entity. However, it can be understood as the power of God represented in a concrete form,<sup>12</sup> so that it is envisaged in a way as distinct from God.<sup>13</sup> Hence it is the omnipotent power of God which gives being and life, and strength and light, and moves men to become good and to do good.<sup>14</sup>

In this sense the term frequently occurs in various books of the Old Testament. Thus it is the omnipotence of God—the "Spirit

<sup>9</sup> *De doct. christ.*, I, 5, 5 (PL 34, 21); *Ad Pascentium Arianum* (PL 33, 1043); *De Trinit.*, I, 4, 7 (PL 42, 824); V, 5, 6 (PL 42, 914); *De civ. Dei*, XI, 29 (CSEL 40, I, 556; ed. B. Dombart-A. Kalb, I [Lipsiae: 1928], 503); *Ep.* 187, IV, 15 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 93); *Ibid.*, 16: "Quis porro audeat opinari, nisi quisquis inseparabilitatem penitus Trinitatis ignorat, quod in aliquo habitare possit Pater aut Filius, in quo non habitet Spiritus sanctus, aut in aliquo Spiritus sanctus in quo non et Pater et Filius?"

<sup>10</sup> Cf. F. Brown-W. R. Driver-C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: 1906), pp. 924 ff.; J. Lebreton, *Les origines du dogme de la Trinité* (8me éd.; Paris: 1927), pp. 100-110; C. Gore, *The Holy Spirit and the Church* (London: 1924), pp. 7-10; P. van Imschoot, "L'action de l'esprit de Jahve dans l'Ancien Testament," *Rev. des sciences phil. et theol.*, XXIII (1934), 553-87; *Id.*, "L'esprit de Jahve, source de vie dans l'Ancien Testament," *Rev. bibl.*, XLIV (1935), 481-501; *id.*, "L'esprit de Jahve et l'alliance nouvelle dans l'Ancien Testament," *Eph. Theol. Lov.*, XIII (1936), 201-220; C. Armerding, "The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament," *Bibl. sacra*. XCII (1935), 277-91, 433-41.

<sup>11</sup> A. Benson, *The Spirit of God in the Didactic Books of the Old Testament* (Washington, D.C.: 1949), pp. 53 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theol. Dogm.*, (2nd ed.; Oeniponte: 1940), II, 124.

<sup>13</sup> P. Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, tr. by W. Heidt (Collegeville, Minn.: 1950), p. 120: "The 'spirit' belongs to Jahveh and is bestowed by Him: there is a distinction between it and God."

<sup>14</sup> P. Heinisch, *loc. cit.*: "The spirit is a power emanating from God which gives life, confers strength, enlightens, and spurs on to virtue."

of God"—which fashions the world from a chaotic mass.<sup>15</sup> It vivifies living beings,<sup>16</sup> and therefore it is in all men and all things through their participation in life and being.<sup>17</sup> It sanctifies men;<sup>18</sup> it produces in them acts of fortitude;<sup>19</sup> it causes in men a prophetic elevation;<sup>20</sup> it sends men on a spiritual mission.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, in some men this power of God resides permanently in the form of a supernatural virtue communicated to the person by God. For example, there is the gift of the power of miracles in Elia and Eliseus.<sup>22</sup> Thus, too, the same spirit fills Joseph, the interpreter of Pharaoh's dreams.<sup>23</sup> It rests upon the Messias.<sup>24</sup> The effusion of this same spirit is promised to the Israelites after they shall have been set free from their misery.<sup>25</sup>

It is evident that St. Augustine does not follow the strict literal interpretation of the Scriptural passages he adduces as arguments for God's omnipresence.<sup>26</sup> Several reasons can be given why he does not follow this exegesis. It must be remembered that the Bishop was seriously handicapped in seeking out the literal meaning of the Books of the Old Testament, when that meaning had to be determined by the original language. Augustine knew no Hebrew and possessed a bare reading knowledge of Greek, and even the latter he preferred to read in Latin translations.<sup>27</sup> Above

<sup>15</sup> Gen. 1:2; cf. Judith 16:17.

<sup>16</sup> Ps. 103:29 f.

<sup>17</sup> Wisd. 12:1.

<sup>18</sup> Ps. 50:3.

<sup>19</sup> Kings 6:33-35.

<sup>20</sup> Num. 11:25; 1 sm. 10, 6; Mich. 3:8.

<sup>21</sup> Is. 48:16.

<sup>22</sup> Kings 2:9-15.

<sup>23</sup> Gen. 41:38.

<sup>24</sup> Is. 11, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Ezech. 36:27; Joel 2:28.

<sup>26</sup> There are texts in the Old Testament which are inclined in the direction of personifying the *ruah Jabveh*, but they must be interpreted as a preparation for it. E.g., Is. 63:10; II Esd. 9:20. Cf. P. Heinisch, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. W. Montgomery, *St. Augustine. Aspects of his Life and Thought* (London: 1914), p. 189: "In regard to his knowledge of languages he freely admits his deficiencies. He knew practically no Hebrew, and he knew much less Greek than he could have desired." Cf. also S. Salaville, "La connaissance du Grec chez s. Augustin," *Echos d'Orient*, XXI (1922), 387-93; P. Guilloux, "Saint Augustin, savait-il le Grec?" *Rev. d'hist. ecclés.*, XXI (1925), 79-83; A. C. Vega, "El helenismo de San Agostín. Llegó San Agostín a dominar el griego?" *Religión y cultura*, I, II (1928), 34-45.

and beyond this, however, he was to a great extent guided by tradition in understanding and interpreting the inspired word of God. In this instance, the Scriptural passages in question and their interpretation had long been in patristic usage as arguments for God's omnipresence.<sup>28</sup>

The passages of Sacred Scripture in which "spirit" occurs were interpreted by the Greek and Latin Fathers as signifying specifically the divine Person of the Holy Ghost. Because of the unity of nature and circumincession of the holy triad of divine Persons, they provided an argument for the ubiquity of any of the three Persons, or simply of the triune God.<sup>29</sup> Or inversely, from the assertion that the spirit is everywhere—ubiquity being considered as an exclusively divine characteristic—not a few Fathers argued against the anti-Trinitarian heretics that the Holy Ghost was not a creature but a divine Person. Such, for example, is the argument advanced for the divinity of the Holy Ghost by St. Athanasius,<sup>30</sup> St. Basil,<sup>31</sup> and Didymus of Alexandria<sup>32</sup> among the Greeks, and St. Ambrose<sup>33</sup> among the Latins at the time of the heresy of Macedonius. This semi-Arian Bishop of Constantinople, who was deposed from his See A.D. 360, had denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit and proclaimed Him to be a creature of the Son.

Even if the scriptural passages used by St. Augustine do not refer literally and according to the original text to the Person of the Holy Ghost, they are valid in proving either directly or in-

<sup>28</sup> E.g., Origen, *On Jeremias*, XXIII, 23-24 (PG 13, 571 f.; GCS 3 ed. E. Klostermann, 206-7); *id.*, *Against Celsus*, IV, 5 (PG 11, 1034; GCS I ed. P. Koetschau, 277); St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Against Julian*, 4 (PG 76, 713); St. Basil, *On the Holy Ghost*, 23 (PG 32, 169); St. Ambr., *Expos. in Ps.* 118, 19, 36-7 (PL 15, 1557; CSEL 62 ed. M. Petschenig, 440-1); St. Hilary, *Tract. in Ps.* 118, 19, 8 (PL 9, 629; CSEL 22 ed. A. Zingerle, 526-7); *id.*, *De S. Trinit.*, 1, 6 (PL 10, 29-30); St. Jerome, *Ep.* 98, 13 (PL 22, 801-802; CSEL 55 ed. I. Hilberg, 197).

<sup>29</sup> E.g., St. Ambr., *Expos. in Ps.* 118, 19, 37 (PL 15, 1557; CSEL 62, 441).

<sup>30</sup> *Ad Serap. Ep.*, 1, 26 (PG 26, 591); 3, 4 (PG 26, 629 f.).

<sup>31</sup> *On the Holy Ghost*, 22 (PG 32, 109); *ibid.*, 54 (PG 32, 169).

<sup>32</sup> *On the Holy Ghost*, 6 (PG 39, 1037).

<sup>33</sup> *De Spiritu Sancto*, I, 7, 85-87 (PL 16, 654). Cassiodorus, *Expositio in Psalterium*, Ps. 88:6 (PL 70, 986), commenting on the passage of Wisdom 1:7, well sums up the reasons of the Fathers when he says: "Sed cum tali praedicatione ubique Spiritum sanctum esse noscamus, dubium non est Spiritum sanctum coaeternum et coequalem Patri et Filio reperiri. Nam ubique et tota esse non potest, nisi sola Trinitas."

directly the omnipresence of God. It is true that certain texts deal directly with some divine attribute, or specifically with the power of God in a concrete or personified form, but it is precisely the universal effectiveness of that quality that they wish to extol. The power or action of God is so all-embracing and so efficacious throughout the whole universe that no created object, either in its inception or continuation, is free from its causality, interposition, and influence. According to the interpretation of those texts by St. Augustine, the extent of the divine omnipotence is measured by, and bound up with, the divine omnipresence.

An excellent example of the concomitance of divine power with the divine presence is found in one of the scriptural texts already quoted in part, namely: "For the spirit of the Lord had filled the whole world: and that, which containeth all things, hath knowledge of the voice."<sup>34</sup> This text plays an important role in the doctrine of the divine presence not only in the writings of the Greek Fathers but also in the works of St. Augustine. It also bears a very close resemblance to expressions found among Greek philosophers relating to the activities of their deities. Both the scriptural text and the dicta of the philosophers gave the Fathers occasion for stressing certain operations of God in nature and connecting them with the divine presence. We shall return to the development of this doctrine among the early Greek philosophers when we consider, in a later chapter, the backgrounds for the teaching of St. Augustine.

In the passage alluded to, the spirit (*πνεῦμα*) of the Lord is said to possess "knowledge of the voice," that is, to perceive every utterance and thus to be witness of every sound and motion.<sup>35</sup> Two reasons are given for the omniscience of the Spirit. Firstly, He is most intimately present to every part of the universe since

<sup>34</sup> Wisd. 1:7. *The Vulgate*: "Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum et hoc, quod continet omnia, scientiam habet vocis." *The Septuaginta*: "Ὅτι πνεῦμα κυρίου πεπλήρωκε τὴν οἰκουμένην, καὶ τὸ συνέχον τὰ πάντα γινώσκων ἔχει φωνῆς."

<sup>35</sup> Cf. P. Heinisch, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Münster: 1912), pp. 17-18; A. T. S. Goodrick, *The Book of Wisdom* (London: 1913), pp. 90-1; *Das Heilige Schrift. Das Buch der Weisheit* ed. F. Feldmann (Bonn: 1926), p. 27; *La Sainte Bible*, ed. L. Pirot-A. Clamer, *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, by Weber (Paris: 1946), p. 403; *Echter Bibel, Das Buch der Weisheit* by J. Fischer (Würzburg: 1950), p. 9.



He pervades it totally (πεπλήρωκε). Secondly, He "contains" (τὸ συνέχον) all things; namely, extrinsically embracing all, He sustains them, and intrinsically drawing their particles, He holds them together. The presence of the Spirit, therefore, is not inactive and inert, but operative, for He encompasses the universe and permeates it. Both actions are for the purpose of sustaining it, a point which will be developed later.

The verb *synéchein* as expressing preservative causality was in use among Greek thinkers of those days.<sup>36</sup> Using this term Aristotle speaks of an all preserving causality.<sup>37</sup> Socrates refers to the demiurge as to the ordainer and preserver of the universe.<sup>38</sup> Philo lauds the creator who contains, that is preserves in existence heaven and earth, water and air.<sup>39</sup> Alexander Aphrodisias maintains that if bodies do not disintegrate but remain whole, the reason is the spirit which holds them together.<sup>40</sup>

Among the Latins, Cicero describes the deity of the Stoics as the common universal nature of things and as containing all things.<sup>41</sup> His use of the term *continere* receives an unequivocal meaning when considered in its context of Stoic philosophy. According to their teaching the material elements of the universe must be maintained in unity (*synéchein, continere*) by a superior element, i.e., the *logos*.<sup>42</sup> Being an active principle the *logos*, God, or the universal soul brings about a cohesion within bodies and binds them together. Without the activity of such a force bodies would disintegrate and scatter. In the active and containing principle there is a certain tension (τόνος) which is the cause of this energy and power of cohesion.

St. Augustine has likewise understood the presence of the Holy Spirit to be of this type, namely permeating and embracing and

<sup>36</sup> Cf. W. Grimm, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Leipzig: 1860), p. 56; Cornely, *op. cit.*, p. 58; J. Lebreton, *Histoire du dogme de la Trinité* (8 me ed.; Paris: 1927), I, 90; H. Von Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta* (Lipsiae: 1924), II, 137, 30; 144, 26-27; 145, 1; 146, 32; 147, 34.

<sup>37</sup> *De mundo*, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Xenoph. *Memorabilia*, IV, 3, 13.

<sup>39</sup> *De vita Moysis*, III, 31.

<sup>40</sup> Alex. Aphrod., *De mixt.* ed. Bruns, p. 224.

<sup>41</sup> *De nat. deor.*, I, 15, 39.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 388-9.



thus sustaining the world. What the Bishop objects to is the assumption that the Spirit pervading the universe in this manner is a created spirit.<sup>43</sup> Patristic tradition and later scholastic theology have relied upon this passage of the Book of Wisdom as one of the principal Scriptural texts to prove the necessity of the divine power for the preservation of the universe. Present-day theologians concur in using the text for the same purpose.<sup>44</sup>

Although Sirah, the author of the Book of Wisdom, adopted a term which was in common use among the literary and philosophical-minded of his day, it is unfounded to maintain (as some do) that he also adopted a modified Platonic and Stoic doctrine of a world-soul. In that case he would have been an exponent of materialistic pantheism which is incompatible with the simplicity and purity of his God. The author lived in Alexandria, a center of Greek culture and science, and was reared in a Hellenistic environment. While he draws certain terms and expressions from Hellenistic and philosophic sources, his fundamental ideas come from older sapiential writers of the Old Testament.<sup>45</sup>

The doctrine of the divine presence is contained in other and older books of the Old Testament,<sup>46</sup> but it has been deepened under the influence of the Book of Wisdom. It teaches that God is present everywhere not only by power and knowledge, but also by nature. Moreover, the sacred author introduces into the mode of God's presence, the manner in which God is active and pervades the universe. It is true that it portrays the subtlety, agility, and activity of wisdom, permeating and supporting all things, and remaining undefiled by them. But to wisdom in this book are ascribed those qualities which are usually described in the Old Testament as belonging to the "spirit of God." In fact in many passages they appear to be identical.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.* II, 1, 5 (PL 40, 132): cf. S. J. Grabowski, "Spiritus Dei in Gen. 1, 2 according to St. Augustine," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* X (1948), 13 ff.

<sup>44</sup> L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae* (3 ed.; Oeniponte: 1940), II, 249; F. Diekamp, *Theologiae Dogmaticae Manuale* (2 ed.; Paris: 1944), II, 32.

<sup>45</sup> P. Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, tr. by W. Heidt (Collegeville, Minn.: 1950), p. 114.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Gen. 1:2; Sir. 24, 3; Jer. 23:24; Ps. 138:1-13; Ps. 104:29.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Heinisch, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Münster: 1935), Einleitung, XLI.

For there is in her a spirit that is intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, agile,  
 Clear, unstained, certain, benign, loving the good, keen, unhampered, beneficent, kindly,  
 Firm, secure, tranquil, all-powerful, all-seeing, and comprehending all spirits, though they be intelligent, pure and very subtle.  
 For wisdom is mobile beyond all motion and she penetrates everywhere by reason of her purity.  
 For she is an aura of the might of God and a pure effusion of the glory of God the Almighty; therefore naught that is sullied enters into her.<sup>48</sup>

#### TRADITION AND THE DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE

The God of the Fathers is a pure spirit without complexity and configuration. This intimate nature of God has a bearing upon the mode of presence in the universe. Moreover, God is immense,<sup>49</sup> which meant to them that He filled and embraced the whole universe with His being, but He Himself could not be encompassed by it. Or, again, He is infinite, and that "not because He is in anything, but all things are within Him."<sup>50</sup> Through immensity and infinity all spatial limitations are removed from God, and God cannot be present by a circumscriptive presence. As a result of these attributes God is present to all beings in the universe at the same time. In fact, the Fathers considered God's pervasion of all things as absolutely necessary and as a mark of His divinity.<sup>51</sup> It is from this ubiquitous presence as revealed in Scripture that they demonstrate the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

St. Cyril of Alexandria,<sup>52</sup> who was approximately a contem-

<sup>48</sup> Wisd. 7:22 ff.; cf. P. Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, tr. by W. Heidt (Collegeville, Minn.: 1950), p. 84.

<sup>49</sup> E.g., S. Clement of Rome, *First Letter to the Cor.* X, 28 ed. F. Funk, *Patres Apostolici* (Tubingae: 1901), I, 135; Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 17 (PL I, 376; G. Rauschen, *Tertulliani Apologetici recensio nova*, Florilegium patristicum, fasc. VI [Bonnae: 1906], 30; CSEL 69 ed. H. Hoppe, 45); in the work *Against the Sabellians*, 10 (PG 28, 111), a spurious writing attributed to St. Athanasius. S. Hilary, *Tract. super Ps.*, 118, 19, 8 (PL 9, 629; CSEL 22, 526).

<sup>50</sup> S. Hilary, *De Trin.* 2, 6 (PL 10, 54): "Infinitus, quia non ipse in aliquo, sed intra eum omnia."

<sup>51</sup> Origen, *Against Celsus*, 4, 5 (PG 11, 1034-5; GCS I, ed. P. Koetschau, 277); Didymus of Alexandria, *Exposition on the Psalms*, 138, 7 and 9 (PG 39, 1595).

<sup>52</sup> *Glaphyra in Genesim*, 4, 3 (PG 69, 187).

porary of St. Augustine, presents a schematic survey of the errors concerning the presence of God, as held even by those who were to prepare the way for the revelations of God. These errors are still more a reflection of the pagan world that surrounded the nascent and the growing Church. The ancients, he says, had a tenuous conception of God. They believed that He dwelt in and was encompassed by that part of the world into which they were called, but that He was not present to the rest of the world. When the idolaters set up for themselves many gods, they assigned separate localities for their cult. They did not believe that the gods could be in all places and worshipped everywhere. Even the Patriarchs, after their conversion from idolatry and the plurality of gods, did not believe that the true God was present in the whole of the earth and in every place. Their knowledge of God was still inadequate. Fuller knowledge concerning the extent of God's presence was imparted to Jacob, viz., that He is present in every place and in every region of the earth, that He is in heaven and He fills the universe. St. Cyril quotes the words of Genesis: <sup>53</sup> "And when Jacob awaked out of sleep, he said: 'Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.'"

One of the principal tenets of the Fathers, which they never tire of repeating, is that the presence of God in the universe is not to be conceived as tridimensional, and hence local. He is not encompassed by space, He does not occupy place.<sup>54</sup> Wherefore, He does not leave His heavenly throne in order to be present elsewhere, nor does He pass from one place to another. He is not subject to locomotion.<sup>55</sup> He is in heaven, on earth, and in all places between, at the same time.<sup>56</sup> The underlying reason, which is often expressed by the Fathers and at times tacitly presupposed, is that God is a

<sup>53</sup> Gen. 28:16.

<sup>54</sup> St. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 2, 2 (PG 8, 937; GCS 3 ed. O. Stählin, 116); "God is not in darkness nor in place, but above place and time, and above the properties of those things which have been created." Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean*, 16 (PL 2, 175; CSEL 47, 258): "in quo omnis locus, non ipse in loco."

<sup>55</sup> St. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 7, 2 (PG 9, 408; GCS 3 ed. O. Stählin, 5); 4, 3 (PG 9, 250-1); Origen, *Against Celsus*, 4, 5 (PG 11, 1034-5; GCS 1, 277); Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Gospel of St. John*, I, 9 (PG 73, 130-1); Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Lord's Prayer*, 5 (PG 44, 1183).

<sup>56</sup> Didymus of Alexandria, *On the Psalms*, 138, 7 and 9 (PG 39, 1595).

Spirit, and as such is not subject to the local limitations of quantitative beings. As St. Cyril of Alexandria expresses it: "God is not in place, nor is He circumscribed by space: for this He cannot suffer who is without quantity, extension and body."<sup>57</sup> The notion and terminology of circumscriptive presence as applied to material beings in opposition to God's mode of presence is common to the Greek Fathers.<sup>58</sup>

In consequence, the divine Being is not present in the universe by parts extended and measured by places. Nor does He occupy some limited place in His wholeness, as the soul occupies the whole body which it animates, but in its own proper way, so that it is whole in the whole body and whole in every part of it. God is, as even the earliest Fathers and ecclesiastical writers expressed it, whole in the whole universe—*ubique totus*.<sup>59</sup> Just as God is alone before the existence of time, place, and creatures, and needs them not for His existence, so after their creation He continues to be the same without being subject to time and place. Time and place are the limitation of creatures, but not of God.<sup>60</sup>

While it is true that God is everywhere and in all things, it is equally true that He is not all the things in which He is.<sup>61</sup> The substance of God is not united with the various entities constituting the universe in the sense that it is one and the same with them. Nor does it enter into composition with them so as to form a composite. God remains undefiled by matter and untouched within His own nature, for in some admirable and ineffable way He is able to permeate all things transcendently without becoming a part of

<sup>57</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On St. John's Gospel* XI, 9 (PG 74, 518); *id.*, *Against Julian*, 4 (PG 76, 714).

<sup>58</sup> For instance, St. Athanasius, *Ep. de decretis nic. syn.*, 11 (PG 25, 441); St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.*, 4, 5 (PG 33, 460; ed. G. C. Reischl, I, 94); Theodoret, *On Genesis* 1 (PG 80, 80).

<sup>59</sup> For instance, Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes*, 6, 4 (PL 5, 1170; CSEL 4, ed. A. Reifferscheid, 217).

<sup>60</sup> Tertullian, *Adversus Praxeum*, 5 (PL 2, 160; CSEL 47, ed. A. Kroymann, 233): "Ante omnia enim Deus erat solus, ipse sibi et mundus et locus et omnia, solus autem, quia nihil aliud extrinsecus praeter illum." See also, *Against the Sabellians*, 9 (PG 28, 111).

<sup>61</sup> Origen, *Peri Archon*, 6, 2 (PG 11, 335; GCS 5, ed. P. Koetschau, 283): "Nam etiamsi nunc quoque ubique et in omnibus esse dicimus Deum, pro eo quod nihil potest esse vacuum Deo, non tamen ita esse dicimus, ut omnia sit nunc in quibus est."



them.<sup>62</sup> The Fathers were aware that they had to select a *via media* between those philosophers who placed their God outside of the universe, in the fashion of deists, and those who envisaged their deity in the universe, which He guided and governed, but who not infrequently went so far as to make Him one with it. Tertullian, who was indebted greatly to Greek secular philosophy and who considerably influenced Greek theological speculation in the early Church,<sup>63</sup> gives eloquent expression to these extreme conceptions of God in the writings of the Greek philosophers.<sup>64</sup>

They merely found God, but they did not examine Him as they found Him, so that they must debate about His quality, His nature, and His abode. Some claim that He is incorporeal, others that He is corporeal—as, for example, the Platonists, and the Stoics; some assert that He is constituted of atoms, other of numbers—as Epicurus and Pythagoras; another says He consists of fire, as it seemed to Heraclitus; while the Platonists attribute to Him concern for the world, on the other hand, the Epicureans say that He lives in a world of repose and inactivity, being, so to say, a non-entity in human affairs; the Stoics, however, say His position is outside the world, in the manner of a potter, who twirls his mass around from the outside, while Plato's followers place Him within the world, in the manner of a pilot, who remains within that which he directs.

The presence of God in the whole universe and in every part of it is at times associated in the writings of the Fathers with His knowledge concerning the whole universe and its very minutest part. Omnipresence postulates, as its counterpart, omniscience.<sup>65</sup> It would appear that the latter is dependent upon the former; but such a comparison is anthropomorphic. In their theology the Fathers ascribe both attributes, that of omnipresence and that of omniscience, to God precisely because as a supreme Being He must be most perfect in every attribute. For practical purposes, espe-

<sup>62</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus*, 6 (PG 75, 74).

<sup>63</sup> G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 97.

<sup>64</sup> Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, 47 (PL 1, 517; CSEL 69 ed. H. Hoppe, 110-111); tr. by Sr. Emily Joseph Daly, C.S.J. in *The Fathers of the Church*, v. 10 (New York: 1950), pp. 115-6.

<sup>65</sup> S. Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione*, 4 (PL 4, 521-2; CSEL 3, ed. G. Hartel, 268): “. . . ut sciamus Deum ubique esse praesentem, audire omnes et videre et majestatis suae plenitudine in abdita quoque et occulta penetrare, sicut scriptum est: ‘ego Deus approximans et non Deus de longinquo.’”



cially writing polemically against pagan deities, the Fathers found it convenient to show how the true God could possess knowledge of all things from His ubiquitous presence in the universe. For this same reason, unlike the many gods of the pagans, He is able to hear us and our prayers coming from any part of the world, and look into our hearts.<sup>66</sup> And again for this same reason, we are not able to flee from the true God, while pagans can make themselves distant from their deities.<sup>67</sup>

The divine presence is conceived by us as an inbeing, an abidance. In the minds of the early Fathers it was associated or identified with the power or activity of God about and in the universe.<sup>68</sup> When the Fathers say that God fills or pervades all things, they also explicitly state that He does so by virtue of His power;<sup>69</sup> they identify the presence of His inbeing with the presence of His power.<sup>70</sup> He fills all things, therefore, in the way and sense that the soul penetrates the body. The soul is in the body as long as it animates it and operates with it; when it ceases to do this, it ceases to abide in the body. The Fathers, thereby, exemplified not only the mode of inbeing, but also the mode of action whereby the human composite subsists.<sup>71</sup> Thus Origen states that just as the human body, which is composed of many parts, is unified and animated by the soul, so also the universe, like some immense living being, is held together and kept in motion by the power of God, as by some vast soul.<sup>72</sup> Tertullian expressly says that "God is in the abysses and everywhere, but by action and power."<sup>73</sup>

To demonstrate the active, vivifying, and impetus-giving pres-

<sup>66</sup> Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes* 6, 4 (PL 5, 1169-1170; CSEL 4, 217); S. Cyprian, *De Dominica Oratione*, 4 (PL 4, 521-2; CSEL 3, 268-9).

<sup>67</sup> Didymus of Alexandria, *On the Psalms*, 138, 7 and 9 (PG 39, 1595).

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2, 2 (PG 8, 936-7; GCS 2 ed. O. Stählin, 115).

<sup>69</sup> Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes*, 6, 4 (PL 5, 1169-70; CSEL 4, 217).

<sup>70</sup> Origen, *Against Celsus*, 4-5 (PG 11, 1034-5; GCS 1, ed. P. Koetschau, 277).

<sup>71</sup> Origen, *On Jeremias*, 23, 23-4 (PG 13, 571-2; GCS 3 ed. E. Klostermann, 206-7); S. Hilary, *Tract. super Ps.*, 118, 19, 8 (PL 9, 629; CSEL 22, 526): "Ubique est modo animae corporalis quae in membris omnibus diffusa a singulis quibusque partibus non abest."

<sup>72</sup> Origen, *Peri Archon*, 2, 3 (PG 11, 183-4; GCS 5 ed. P. Koetschau, 108).

<sup>73</sup> Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean*, 23 (PL 2, 184-5; CSEL 47, 271); "scimus Deum etiam intra abyssos esse et ubique consistere, sed vi et potestate."

ence of God, the Fathers from the earliest times formed the tradition of invoking especially two texts of St. Paul in which God's action relative to man and the universe is most vividly portrayed. These classical texts are: "In Him we live, and move, and are," recorded in the Acts of the Apostles;<sup>74</sup> and, "of Him, and by Him, and in Him, are all things," found in the Epistle to the Romans,<sup>75</sup> the Apostle of the Gentiles, as did the Fathers later, made these words bear against the heathens and their gods, who neither created the universe, did not lend life or motion to man and animal, nor could exert any physical influence on the universe.<sup>76</sup>

The Fathers speak of God as being diffused throughout the universe, and pervading and filling all things in it.<sup>77</sup> By such terms, taken from the domain of sense and nature, they wish to express the absolute necessity of God's inbeing or presence in all things if they are to continue to be. It would appear from the words themselves that the notion thereby expressed is a simple inbeing, a static inherence. However, when they proceed to analyze this presence, they finish by saying in effect that it is a power. St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "It is a virtue and a power worthy of God to be everywhere, to fill heaven and earth in an unspeakable way, to hold all things, but not be encompassed by any."<sup>78</sup> In a work that appears under the name of St. Athanasius, but which was not writ-

<sup>74</sup> Act. 17:28: "In ipso enim vivimus, et movemur, et sumus."

<sup>75</sup> Rom. 11:36: "Quoniam ex ipso, et per ipsum, et in ipso sunt omnia." The Vulgate has in ipso whereas the Greek text *ἐν αὐτῷ*.

<sup>76</sup> Origen, *Peri Archon*, 2, 3 (PG 11, 183-4; GCS 5 ed. P. Koetschau, 108) for which no Greek text is extant: "Sed et illud quod ait Paulus cum apud Athenienses concionaretur, dicens quoniam 'in ipso vivimus, et movemur, et sumus.' Quomodo enim in Deo vivimus, et movemur, et sumus, nisi quod virtute sua universum constringit et continet mundum? Quomodo autem coelum sedes Dei est, et terra scabellum pedum ejus, sicut ipse Salvator pronuntiat, nisi quia et in coelo et in terra virtus ejus replet universa sicut et dicit: 'Nonne coelum et terram ego repleo, dicit Dominus' (Jer. 23:24)."

<sup>77</sup> Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones*, 7, 3 (PL 6, 743; CSEL 19, 589); *id.*, *De Opificio Dei*, 16 (PL 7, 64-65, 66); the work *Against the Sabellians*, 10 (PG 28, 111 f.); S. Athanasius, *Letter to Serapion*, 1, 26 (PG 26, 591 f.); *id.*, *Against the Arians*, 3, 15 (PG 26, 354); *id.*, *Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word*, 17 (PG 25, 126); *id.*, *Against the Gentiles*, 6 (PG 25, 14).

<sup>78</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Gospel of St. John*, XI, 9 (PG 74, 518): "Ἐνέργεια δὲ καὶ δύναμις θεοπρεπῆς, τὸ εἶναι πανταχῇ, . . . ; *ibid.*, I, 9 (PG 73, 130): ". . . He fills all things by the ineffable power of His Deity . . . nothing is devoid of His Divinity, . . . and everywhere penetrating all things, He is absent from nothing."

ten by him, we read: "God did not fill all things in the sense that He pervades all space, for this is proper to corporeal bodies; but . . . as some power which contains all things; for a power is immaterial, invisible, it is not surrounded, nor does it surround. God created all things and preserves them by containing them."<sup>79</sup>

In their doctrine concerning the relationship of the universe to God, the Fathers take every precaution and every occasion to disengage God from time and space. In reference to time, He is without beginning (*ἀγένετος*) in contrast to creation which has an origin. Opposing the Manichaeon doctrine of a two-fold absolute principle, they deny the existence of two uncreated *ageneta*. In reference to space they emphatically reiterate again and again that God, not being a material substance, does not occupy space. He is *ἀχώρητος*. This teaching and terminology occur in the earliest Christian writings.

In this apocryphal apocalypse, the *Shepherd*, written between 140–150, Hermas teaches that God is one and the creator of all things out of nothing, and that He "contains" all things but is "uncontained" Himself.<sup>80</sup> St. Justin, who was converted to Christianity with a knowledge of secular philosophy, makes use of the same term somewhat later (after 150) than Hermas. "God," says St. Justin, "is not encompassed by place."<sup>81</sup> Patrologists are not unanimous in interpreting his mind on the divine presence. According to J. Quasten, "Justin denies the substantial omnipresence of God."<sup>82</sup> According to G. L. Prestige, "Justin claims that God is uncontained either in one place or in the whole universe, since He existed before the universe came into being."<sup>83</sup> Likewise, M. Schmaus says that St. Justin's words are not to be taken literally, in a cosmological sense, but are to be interpreted as expressing God's transcendence over the universe.<sup>84</sup>

St. Theophilus of Antioch states it is a characteristic of the true

<sup>79</sup> *Against the Sabellians*, 10 (PG 28, 111).

<sup>80</sup> Hermas, *Pastor*, Mand 1, 1 (PG 2, 913; ed. F. X. Funk, *Patres Apostolici* (Tubingae: 1901), I, 468): "πάντα χωρῶν, μόνος δὲ ἀχώρητος ὢν."

<sup>81</sup> St. Justin, *Dial.*, 127, 2 (PG 6, 772): "οὔτε κινούμενος ὁ τόπῳ τε ἀχώρητος, καὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ὄλῳ."

<sup>82</sup> J. Quasten, *Patrology* (Westminster, Md.: 1950), p. 208.

<sup>83</sup> G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 5.

<sup>84</sup> M. Schmaus, *Katholische Dogmatik* (4 Auf.; Munchen: 1948), I, 290.

God not only to be everywhere, but also to be uncontained by place.<sup>85</sup> In a text whose original Greek has been lost, St. Irenaeus of Lyons follows the established doctrine when he says that God encompasses all things, but alone is unencompassed.<sup>86</sup> A treatise ascribed to St. Athanasius refers to God as filling heaven and earth, and interprets this divine presence in the sense that He contains all creation, but He Himself is not contained by any creature.<sup>87</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria reiterates the doctrine and terminology of his Greek predecessors when he asserts that it is becoming for the divine power to be everywhere, to fill heaven and earth, to pervade all beings, to contain all things, but to be uncontained and unencompassed by anything.<sup>88</sup>

A fuller explanation of the problem involved is furnished by St. Methodius, a Platonist and Bishop of Lycia. In his treatise *On Free Will*, from a section headed "Concerning God and Matter," we read:

A third explanation might be advanced as applying to the *ageneta*, that neither is God separated from matter nor again are they united as parts, but that God resides locally in matter, as matter in God. The consequence is this. If we call matter the local extension of God, it necessarily follows that He is also contained (*χωρητός*) and circumscribed by matter. Similarly He must be driven about irregularly at the instance of matter—instead of remaining constant, and continuing in His own control—according as the element in which He is present is driven. Further, it will be necessary to admit that God resides even in what is less perfect. For if matter was ever formless and God ordered it, by an act of will for its improvement, then time was when God resided in what was unordered.<sup>89</sup>

Already St. Justin gives the most fundamental reason why God is independent of the limitations of place and is, therefore, uncon-

<sup>85</sup> S. Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autol.*, 2, 3 (PG 6, 1049; ed. I. C. J. de Otto, *Corpus Apolog.*, VIII, 50): "ὅτι μὴν μηδὲ τὸ ἐν τόπῳ χωρεῖσθαι."

<sup>86</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, II, 30, 9 (MG 7, 822; ed. Harvey, I, 367): "omnia sapiens, solus autem a nemine capi potest." He very probably employed the traditional Greek terminology.

<sup>87</sup> St. Athanasius, *Sermo major de Fide*, 29 (PG 26, 1284): "πάντα δὲ χωρεῖ ὁ Θεός, ὅπ' οὐδενὸς δὲ οὐ χωρεῖται."

<sup>88</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On St. John's Gospel*, 11, 9 (PG 74, 518): "χωρεῖν μὲν ἐν πᾶσι χωρεῖσθαι δὲ ὑπὸ μηδενός." *Id.*, *Against Julian*, 2 (PG 76, 611).

<sup>89</sup> St. Methodius, *On Free Will* (PG 18, 252); cf. G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 28.



tained in any place or even in the whole world. He who existed before the universe cannot now be confined to any spatial existence in it after it has been called into being.<sup>90</sup> This reasoning is amplified in the work *Against the Sabellians*: "For the works do not contain the maker, who was before them, and lends existence to them, and preserves them by his own power."<sup>91</sup> This thought runs through the course of Greek patristic literature. Theodoret lays down the principle that things that have a beginning are necessarily spatially circumscriptive substances.<sup>92</sup> St. John of Damascus, the last of the Greek Fathers and a diligent compiler of their doctrine, asserts that only an uncreated nature cannot be encompassed by spatial limitations.<sup>93</sup> Cognate is the thought of St. Athanasius according to whom man is necessarily subject to circumscriptive presence because in his existence he is dependent upon God who truly is.<sup>94</sup> What the Fathers say of the circumscriptive presence of created beings is applicable to both material and immaterial substances, as they themselves expressly indicate.

The term *achóretos* when used in connection with the presence of God denies that God is present in the universe in the manner that a material being, man, or even a pure spirit, is in a certain place. God has not a spatial or local presence, He is not circumscribed because as the supreme Spirit He is immense. This consideration may be termed as the static relation of space and the universe to God. There is another consideration of God's inbeing in the universe. It is God's activity, which can be called dynamic presence. The dynamic presence of God is generally connected with the verb *συνέχειν* which likewise is usually translated into Latin by *continere*. The Greek and Latin Fathers say that God "contains" the universe.

The Latin verb *continere*, therefore, translates both Greek words *chorétos* and *synéchein*, but the meaning is different in each case. *Chorétos* refers to what was called static presence, and *synéchein* to what was called dynamic presence. Static presence—to contain all things and not to be contained—is a negation of that

<sup>90</sup> St. Justin, *Dial.*, 127, 2 (PG 6, 772).

<sup>91</sup> *Against the Sabellians*, 9 (PG 28, 111).

<sup>92</sup> Theodoret, *On Genesis*, 1 (PG 80, 80).

<sup>93</sup> St. John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa*, 2, 3 (PG 94, 869).

<sup>94</sup> St. Athanasius, *Ep. de decretis nic. syn.*, 11 (PG 25, 441).



mode of presence that is proper to material and immaterial substances which by their very nature have spatial or local delimitations. Such beings are said to be "contained" whereas God is "uncontained." The dynamic presence of God expressed by *synéchein* is conceived as the divine power operating in the whole universe and in every part of it.

St. Irenaeus, describing the immensity of God who by His omnipotent will brings all things out of nothing into the fullness of being, tells us that God contains every individual being and brings it to the end for which it was created.<sup>95</sup> Although the Greek original is wanting, it is evident from the text and from the context in which he describes the manner and the effects of God's inbeing that Irenaeus has the dynamic presence of God in mind.<sup>96</sup>

Origen, who has exerted a tremendous influence upon the doctrine and Scriptural exegesis of his time and of posterity, speaking of God's presence, quotes the words of the Book of Wisdom<sup>97</sup> that the Spirit of God fills the universe and contains all things.<sup>98</sup> In this Scriptural passage both the static and dynamic presence of God is mentioned. But it is the latter, expressed by the verb *synéchein* that is of concern to us now. It expresses an action of God. The same Origen, quoting the words of St. Paul, asks how we can live, and be moved, and be in God unless in the sense that He holds the universe together by His divine power and thus contains it.<sup>99</sup>

Origen further illustrates this divine activity in the universe by comparing it to the relation that exists between body and soul. As the body is composed of many parts which are unified and animated by the soul, so also the universe consisting of innu-

<sup>95</sup> Frag. 6, *Ex sermone ad Demetrium* (PG 7, 1231; ed. Harvey, II, 478): "Immensus cum sit Deus et mundi opifex atque omnipotens, immensa atque mundi opifice atque omnipotenti voluntate, et effectu novo potenter et efficaciter fecit ut omnis plenitudo eorum quae nata sunt in ortum venirent, cum antea non essent, quidquid scilicet sub aspectum non cadit et quidquid oculis subicitur. Atque ideo continet singula, et ad proprium perducit exitum, ob quem excitata sunt et nata, nullo modo in aliud, quam prius natura fuerat, transmutatum."

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, "Nam proprium hoc est operationis Dei."

<sup>97</sup> *Wisd.*, 1:7.

<sup>98</sup> Origen, *Against Celsus*, 4, 5 (PG 11, 1034-5).

<sup>99</sup> Origen, *Peri Archon*, 2, 3 (PG 11, 183-84): "Quomodo enim in Deo vivimus et movemur et sumus, nisi quod virtute sua universum constringit et continet mundum?"

merable individual beings is held together by the divine power as by some huge soul.<sup>100</sup> He expressly contends that the filling of the universe with God is the filling of it with his power by which the universe is contained.<sup>101</sup> Although the original Greek is not available for some of these important passages of Origen, nevertheless the words relating to the dynamic presence of God could be easily restored with much probability from Scriptural sources and from established Greek tradition.

Origen's thought is reiterated and expanded by Didymus of Alexandria, whose influence upon the Trinitarian theology of the Latins can be felt in the works of St. Hilary and St. Ambrose. In the defense of the divinity of the Holy Ghost, he teaches that while no created being can fill the universe, and contain all things (συνέχει τὰ πάντα), the Holy Ghost does this in such a way that His divine power is unconfined and inexhaustible.<sup>102</sup> Another Alexandrian, St. Cyril, states that the divine hand embraces every place and every creature and holds them together in their being. The translator of the Greek text in Migne does well when he makes use of two Latin verbs *continere* and *conservare* to correspond to the Greek *synéchein*.<sup>103</sup> St. John of Damascus succinctly calls God the creator, provider, and sustainer of all things.<sup>104</sup>

The Greek word *synéchein*, therefore, is used to denote that divine action whereby the universe is preserved in its existence. There is another similar term which occurs frequently in connection with the presence of God. It has the same basic verb but a different preposition; viz., *περιέχειν*. It appears to be used in the same manner as *synéchein*, but upon closer examination it will be

<sup>100</sup> Origen, *Ibid.*: "sed sicut corpus nostrum ex multis membris aptatum est et ab anima continetur, ita et universum mundum . . . quasi ab una anima virtute Dei ac ratione teneatur."

<sup>101</sup> Origen, *Ibid.* p. 184: "Quomodo parens omnium Deus universum mundum virtutis plenitudine repleat atque contineat, ex his quae ostendimus non puto quemquam difficulter annuere."

<sup>102</sup> Didymus of Alexandria, *On the Trinity*, 2, 6, 2 (PG 39, 509).

<sup>103</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On St. John's Gospel*, IX, 9 (PG 73, 130-31): "Omnem locum et omnem creaturam divina manus complectitur, continens et conservans in suo esse res creatas (συνέχουσα πρὸς τὸ εἶναι τὰ πεποιημένα)."

<sup>104</sup> St. John of Damascus, *De fid. orth.*, 2, 12 (PG 94, 873): "Παντῶν δὲ παιγῆτης, καὶ προνοητῆς καὶ συνεχέως ὁ Θεὸς ἐστίν."

discovered that the meaning is not synonymous, but corresponds to *achóretos*. It is true that this difference cannot be deduced from the Latin translations which use practically the same terms, viz., *continere*, *capere*, *complecti* to render the Greek verbs *synéchein* and *periéchein*.

Using the Greek verb *periéchein*, St. Clement of Alexandria writes that God is not confined to place since He is above place and time. He cannot be in any part of the universe either as embracing it or as being encompassed by it, whether by total circumscription or in part.<sup>105</sup> Speaking of the Son of God and using the same verb, Clement asserts that He is always present everywhere, but "contained" nowhere.<sup>106</sup> St. Basil, employing the same term, teaches that the Word of God cannot be confined to place, because that which cannot be circumscribed cannot be "contained" in place.<sup>107</sup> In like manner writes St. Gregory of Nyssa that He who is everywhere is not present circumscriptively in any one part but that He "contains" equally all things.<sup>108</sup> And again the Cappadocian Father asks, who, after viewing and considering the universe, can be so puerile as not to believe that God surrounds, contains and is in it.<sup>109</sup>

A circumscriptive presence, writes St. Athanasius, is only proper to men who do not have their subsistence in themselves but God who truly subsists in Himself contains all things and is contained by none.<sup>110</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius, writing between 485 and 515 and drawing from the Greek Fathers and the Neoplatonists, makes use of both Greek terms *synéchein* and *periéchein* in one breath, stating that God contains and embraces all things.<sup>111</sup>

Hence the Greek *periéchein*, although translated by the Latin

<sup>105</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 2, 2 (PG 8, 936): "οὔτε περιέχων, οὔτε περιεχόμενος, ἢ κατὰ ὁρίσμῳν τινα, ἢ κατὰ ἀποτομήν."

<sup>106</sup> St. Clement of Alexandria, *Ibid.*, 7, 2 (PG 9, 408): "μηδαμῇ περιεχόμενος."

<sup>107</sup> St. Basil, *Hom.*, *In the beginning was the Word*, 4 (PG 31, 479). "Οὐκ ἐν τόπῳ, οὐ γὰρ περιέχεται τόπῳ τὰ ἀπερίγραπτα."

<sup>108</sup> St. Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Lord's Prayer*, 5 (PG 44, 1183); cf. also *De Ascensione Domini* (PG 46, 694) attributed to him.

<sup>109</sup> *Orat. Cat.*, 25 (PG 45, 65).

<sup>110</sup> St. Athanasius, *Ep. de decretis nic. syn.*, 11 (PG 25, 441); cf. also a work attributed to Athanasius, viz., *Against the Sabellians*, 9 (PG 28, 11): "The things made do not contain the maker, who was before them. . . ."

<sup>111</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, 10, 1 (PG 3, 936).

"contain" refers to spatial or local presence. It is expressive of a mode of presence that is finite and circumscriptive. God is said not to be contained in a place, or circumscribed by space in the manner that material or created spiritual beings are extended and limited in them. God is said, however, to contain all beings because He is infinite and immense (*immensus*), and all created beings are, as it were immersed in His being and presence. Because of its immensity and infiniteness, his Being serves, so to speak, as a container or a substratum for the existence of all created beings.

A good example of how accurately the Greek Fathers were able to distinguish between the use of *periéchein* and *synéchein* is found in one and the same passage of St. Athanasius. It would seem that making the transition from one verb to the other in what would appear on the surface to be the same meaning, is an indication of an indiscriminate use of either verb to denote the same thing. Yet upon closer investigation it will be discovered that the selection of two different words is indicative of diverse concepts.

Speaking of the Incarnate Word, St. Athanasius maintains that it was not contained by anything, but that rather it contained all things. In this first part of the passage he uses *synéchein*.<sup>112</sup> The reason for the use of this verb will be evident when we consider the dynamic presence ascribed to the Word in the universe. "For," he says, "the Word is in all created things by its power: it administers all things; extends its providential activity to every part of the universe; it gives life to each and all beings at the same time."

Athanasius says again that the Word contains all things but is contained by none. In this instance he makes use of *periéchein*, for "contains" and "is contained."<sup>113</sup> The reason which he now gives why the Word contains and is not contained is because it is wholly contained in the Father. In other words, the essence of the Father, and He alone, is able to contain or encompass the essence of the Word which is consubstantial with the Father. The implication of course is that no created thing or even the universe is able to encompass the Word which is God.

The Greek Fathers, therefore, made use of three well-defined terms, which occur with the regularity of technical expressions, to

<sup>112</sup> St. Athanasius, *Treatise on the Incarnation*, 17 (PG 25, 126).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*



explain God's mode of inbeing in the universe. The adjective *achóretos* and the verb *periéchein* are used for the same concept, viz., to denote God's mode of presence as different from, and opposed to the limited and circumscriptive presence of created beings. The verb *synéchein* is used to denote a dynamic presence which is at the same time the conservative cause of the existences of all created beings.

All of these three Greek words are rendered in the tradition of the Latin Fathers by a single term, viz., *continere*. From this arises the difficulty of determining the precise meaning of *continere* as used by the early Fathers and post-patristic Latin writers, since it corresponds at times to the incircumscriptive immensity of God and at times to the power of God sustaining the universe in existence.

Tertullian speaks of God as holding or embracing the universe with his hand as a nest.<sup>114</sup> Arnobius makes it a characteristic of God to fill all things by His power.<sup>115</sup> Lactantius says that the divine Spirit is everywhere diffused and that all things are contained by Him.<sup>116</sup> Then come the Latin Fathers who follow in the wake of Origen. St. Hilary states that God is "infinite, because He is not in anything, but all things are in Him; (He is) always outside of place, because He is not contained."<sup>117</sup> And in another work the same Father asserts that God is not confined to corporeal places, nor is the immensity of His divine power restricted by limitations or spaces.<sup>118</sup> St. Ambrose, the immediate predecessor of St. Augustine, describes God as embracing all things, but Himself not "confused," as penetrating all things, but Himself not "penetrated."<sup>119</sup>

<sup>114</sup> Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, 2, 25 (PL 2, 25; CSEL 47, 369-70): "qui totum orbem comprehendit manu velut nidum." *Id.*, *Adv. Praxeas*, 16 (PL 2, 175; CSEL 47, 257-58): "qui totum orbem manu adprehendit velut nidum."

<sup>115</sup> Arnobius, *Adv. Nationes*, 6, 4 (PL 5 1169-70; CSEL 4, 217): "Hoc est enim proprium deorum, complere omnia vi sua, . . ."

<sup>116</sup> Lactantius, *Div. Inst.*, 7, 3 (PL 6, 743; CSEL 19, 589): "divinum spiritum esse ubique diffusum eoque omnia contineri, . . ."

<sup>117</sup> St. Hilary, *De Trinit.*, 2, 6 (PL 10, 54.).

<sup>118</sup> St. Hilary, *Tract. super Ps.*, 118, 19, 8 (PL 9, 629; CSEL 22, 526): "Non corporalibus locis Deus continetur neque finibus aut spatiis divinae virtutis immensitas coarctatur."

<sup>119</sup> St. Ambrose, *De fide*, 1, 16, 106 (PL 16, 552; ed. Ballerini, IV, 597): "Complexens omnia, nusquam ipse confusus, penetrans omnia, nusquam ipse penetrandus."



Likewise St. Jerome, a contemporary of St. Augustine, refers to the Holy Ghost as containing all things and surrounding them with His majesty.<sup>120</sup>

From an analysis of such texts and contexts, it will be gleaned that the verb "to contain" (*continere*) used in connection with God and the universe by the Latin Fathers has two distinct meanings. Firstly, similar to the Greek Fathers, the Latins maintain that God has not a spatial, local circumscriptive presence. He is not in the universe in the manner of limited creatures, material and immaterial, but the universe with all of its constituent beings is rather in His immensity and infiniteness. Secondly, "to contain" assumes, as it also does in Greek patristic literature, the meaning of divine action in the universe. It is an operative inbeing whereby God is necessary for the preservation of that which He created.

It is remarkable that while the Greek as well as Latin Fathers of the pre-Augustinian period speak frequently of God's presence in terms of His power and activity in the universe, they avoid, and apparently on purpose, associating this presence with the essence, nature, or substance of God. In fact, texts are available from one of the Fathers of this period, St. Athanasius, which, when speaking of the presence of God in the universe, expressly distinguish between the essence of God and His power, and maintain that God is outside of the universe according to His substance, but within it according to His power. One passage deals directly with the divine Word, but speaks of attributes which are applicable simply to God.

Existing in all created things, He is outside of the whole universe according to His essence,—but in all things according to His power—, administers all things, extends His providence over all things, gives life to all beings: containing all things, He is contained by none.<sup>121</sup>

Another passage, while likewise speaking of the Word of God, describes the manner in which God is present. It again makes the distinction between power and nature and states that God is in all

<sup>120</sup> St. Jerome, *Ep.* 98, 13 (PL 22, 801; CSEL 55, 197): "‘quo abibo a Spiritu tuo?’ quod dicens ostendit sancto Spiritu omnia contineri et illius majestate circumdari."

<sup>121</sup> St. Athanasius, *Treatise on the Incarnation of the Word*, 17 (PG 24, 126).

things by His goodness and power, but is external to them by His nature.

Because men cannot exist in themselves, they are circumscribed by place and subsist in the Word; but God who truly is by Himself, contains all things but is not contained by any thing Himself; He is in all things by His goodness and power; but outside of all things by His own nature.<sup>122</sup>

Yet the theology of the Fathers implicitly contained, if it did not expressly state, the principle whereby the divine action was inseparable from the divine essence. Wherefore, where the divine power was operative the divine substance would be expected to be present by the same token. However, the distinction between the essence and power of God as separate factors is good indication of the effort made by the Fathers to preclude identification of the universe with the Creator. It was much later that the inbeing of the divine substance or essence was expressly associated with the omnipresence of God in contradistinction to the divine power. In the scholastic period it became a theological pattern to state that God was in all things by His substance (*per substantiam*) and by His power (*per potentiam*).<sup>123</sup>

This manner of conceiving the presence of God will perhaps throw light on the very earliest attempts of the Greek Fathers to define the term God, Θεός, by seeking out such etymological derivatives as signify power, motion, activity. Thus Theophilus speculates in this manner: "God because he 'goes': to go (θέω) means to run and move and activate and nourish and foresee and govern and give life to everything."<sup>124</sup> Gregory of Nyssa associates the name of God with His activity in overseeing: "for believing that the deity is present to all and beholds all, we express this thought by that name. . . . He is named God from His beholding."<sup>125</sup>

<sup>122</sup> St. Athanasius, *Ep. de decretis nic. syn.*, 11 (PG 25, 441).

<sup>123</sup> Albertus Magnus, *Com. in I Sent.*, dis. 37, a. 2, ad 3um, ad obj. 3 (Parisiis, 1892), 232; Alexander Halensis, *Summa Theol.*, l. I, p. 1, inq. 1, tr. 2, q. 3, lib. 3, c. 4 (Quaracchi, 1924), p. 75; S. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, Ia, q. 8, a. 3; IIIa, q. 6, a. 1 ad lum; *Com. in lib. Sent.*, I, 37, 1, 2; S. Bonaventura, *Com. in lib. Sent.*, I, 37, 1, 1, 1 (Quaracchi, 1882), p. 638.

<sup>124</sup> Theophilus, *To Autolicus*, 1, 4 (MG 6, 1029); *Corpus Apologetarum Christianorum saeculi secundi*, ed. I, C. T. de Otto (Jenae, 1851-1881), VIII, 12.

<sup>125</sup> *Against Eunomius*, XII (PG 45, 1108). As does also St. Basil, *Ep.*, 8, 11

Dionysius of Alexandria derives it from "to dispose," and says: "God is so-called because He 'disposed' all things."<sup>126</sup> Clement of Alexandria states: "He has been called God on the ground of institution and regulation—as Disposer."<sup>127</sup> The derivations suggested by these Fathers appear to be fanciful and unhistorical but they nevertheless indicate the types of ideas that were associated with the name of God in the minds of these religious men.<sup>128</sup>

### REASON AND GOD

For the formation of his doctrine of the divine omnipresence, St. Augustine thus relies upon the dicta of Holy Writ and especially upon their traditional, patristic interpretation. Another *a priori* factor which is of prime importance in leading him on in his philosophical disquisitions on God and in shaping his conception of God, must be taken into consideration. Christian reason postulates a rational conception of God as the most perfect being. Since a knowledge of God originates in a finite mind and is drawn from a limited and mutable universe, such knowledge must be processed before it can constitute a right conception of God. Concepts drawn and formed from the universe must be divested of all imperfections and limitations, and then sublimated to the highest degree of perfection before they can be properly predicated of the Supreme Being.

While the revealed word of God and its interpretation by the Fathers are the major fountainheads from which issue our knowledge of God, reason also adds its share of light and guidance to that cognition. "God," says St. Augustine, "must be conceived as a certain great and highest substance, which transcends every mutable creature."<sup>129</sup> This approach to God was familiar in the

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(PG 32, 265): "From this is He called θεός that He has disposed all things and beholds them."

<sup>126</sup> Theophilus, *To Autolicus*, 1, 4 (MG 6, 1029); *Corpus Apologetarum*, VIII, 12.

<sup>127</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 1, 29 (PG 8, 930; GCS 2, ed. O. Stählin, 112).

<sup>128</sup> G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 1; cf. however, J. B. Wimmer, "Die Etymologie des Wortes θεός," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, XLIII (1919), 193-212; G. Esser, *Theologia Naturalis* (Tehny, Ill.: 1949), p. 2.

<sup>129</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* I, 8 (PL 35, 1383): "Magna et summa quaedam substantia

works of the Fathers before St. Augustine's time. It was from their theology and philosophy on God that Augustine as a new convert appropriated this rationalizing process in order to conceive of God in a perfect, comprehensive, and orthodox manner. The God of St. Augustine is not the projection of Plato's Supreme Idea or the *Summum Bonum* into the metaphysical realm, as Santayana would have us believe.<sup>130</sup> Nor is it the externalization into the sphere of reality of the concept of the most perfect Being as understood by the Augustinian-minded St. Anselm in his aprioristic ontological proof for the existence of God.<sup>131</sup>

In the earliest patristic works there are three salient points that strike us concerning the attributes which are predicable of God. 1. Following the paths of Sacred Scripture,<sup>132</sup> the Fathers teach that God and His attributes are in some measure knowable from the created universe.<sup>133</sup> St. Augustine, too, admits the cognoscibility of God from creation, and consequently an ascent of the mind from the creature and the perfections inherent in it to the Creator and His perfections.<sup>134</sup> His Platonic mind, however, shows

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*cogitata est, quae transcendat omnem mutabilem creaturam, carnalem et animalelem.*"

<sup>130</sup> G. Santayana, *The Life of Reason* (New York: 1924), pp. 155 f. and pp. 159 f. He is right however in interpreting the mind of St. Augustine when he writes on p. 156: "Whenever a man, reflecting on his experience, conceived the better or the best, the perfect and the eternal, he conceived God, inadequately, of course, yet essentially, because God signified the comprehensive ideal of all the perfections which the human spirit could behold in itself or in its objects."

<sup>131</sup> *Prosl.*, c. 2 (PL 158, 227-28), although St. Anselm, as does his master St. Augustine, rightly contends that the "quo majus cogitari non potest" is derived from the contemplation of creatures. *Apol. contra Gaun.*, c. 8 (PL 158; 258). Compare St. Anselm's mode of argumentation with that of St. Thomas, in *Summa contra Gentes* I, 10, who disapproves of it.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. A. DeGulielmo, "The Bible and the Knowability of God," *Franciscan Studies*, XXIV (1943), 339-363.

<sup>133</sup> L. Fuetscher, "Die natürliche Gotteserkenntnis bei Tertullian," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, LI (1927), 1-35; L. Escoula, Saint Irénée et la connaissance naturelle de Dieu," *Rev. des sciences religieuses*, XX (1940), 252-271; J. E. Emmenegger, *The Functions of Faith and Reason in the Theology of Saint Hilary of Poitiers* (Washington, D.C.: 1947), pp. 54 ff.

<sup>134</sup> *Confess.*, X, 6, 8-10; XI, 4, 6 (PL 32, 782 f., 811; ed. M. Skutella [Lipsiae: 1934], 214-17; 267-68). *Sermo* 141, 2, 2 (PL 38, 776); *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 32, 49 (PL 34, 316; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 129-130); *Enar. in Ps.* 41, 6-7 (PL 34, 467-68); *Sermones* (Mai) in *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (ed. G. Morin; Rome: 1930), I, 126: "Fuerunt ergo quidam, non sicut Moyses . . . , non sicut pro-



a predilection for reaching God from the existence of abstract and immutable truths, which are divine in their own right and consequently indicative of their divine source.<sup>135</sup> 2. The Fathers also make every effort to divest the conception of God from any tinge of anthropomorphism and from every trace of imperfection. This is evidently also the case with St. Augustine.<sup>136</sup> 3. The Fathers sometimes expressly state, but more frequently imply that the divine attributes, if they are genuine and pure, must be divested of all limitations, and thus be raised to the highest imaginable degree, in order to be rightly predicated of God. They thus indicate the role that reason plays in the formation of a Christian concept of God. To use the words of St. Basil, man "progresses in thought to that which is the highest."<sup>137</sup> St. Augustine likewise asserts that God is immeasurably more perfect and excellent than the things He created.<sup>138</sup> Thus early Christian tradition<sup>139</sup> extols God as a

phetae . . . adjuti spiritu Dei . . . non ergo tales. Sed fuerunt alii dissimiles, qui per istam creaturam potuerunt pervenire ad intelligendum creatorem, et dicere de his quae fecit Deus." Cf. M. Pontet, *L'exégèse de S. Augustin prédicateur* (Paris: 1945), pp. 324-25. It is, therefore, incorrect to state that the unaided reason of man according to St. Augustine cannot ascend from a contemplation of the created universe to the Creator without His illumination. Such, for instance, is the assertion of Herschel Baker, *The Dignity of Man* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1947), ch. XI Augustine and the Medieval View of Man, p. 162.

<sup>135</sup> *De Trinit.*, IX, 7, 12; XII, 2, 2 (PL 42, 967, 999). Cf. J. Geysers, *Augustin und die phänomenologische Religionsphilosophie der Gegenwart mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Max Schelers* (Münster: 1932); E. Gilson, *God and philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), pp. 57 ff.

<sup>136</sup> *De natura boni*, 22 (PL 42, 558; CSEL 25, II ed. J. Zycha, 864); compare with St. Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum*, III, 2, 11 (PL 16, 148; ed. Ballerini, S. Ambrosii opera omnia [Milani: 1875 ff.] IV, 148).

<sup>137</sup> S. Basil, *On the Holy Ghost*, 19, 22 (PG 32, 107).

<sup>138</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 5, 7 (PL 32, 736 ed. M. Skutella, 130): "Dicebam: Ecce Deus, et ecce quae creavit Deus, et bonus est Deus, atque his validissime longissimeque praestantior; . . ."

<sup>139</sup> E.g., St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, IV, 11, 2 (PG 7, 1002; ed. W. H. Harvey [Cambridge: 1857] II, 175); cf. F. R. M. Hitchcock, *Irenaeus of Lugdunum. A Study of His Teaching* (Cambridge: 1914), pp. 80 ff.; St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 4, 5 (MG 33, 460; ed. G. C. Reischl and J. Rupp [S. Cyrilli Hierosolymorum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt omnia, Monaci: 1848-1860], I, 94); St. Ambrose, *De officiis ministrorum*, III, 2, 11 (PL 16, 148; ed. Ballerini [Milani: 1875], IV, 148): Deus "perfectus in omnibus;" St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Dialogues on the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity*, 1 (MG 75, 673); St. John Damascene, *On the Orthodox Faith*, I, 5 (MG 94, 801); St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*, I, 3 (MG 45, 601; ed. F. Oehler [Halle, 1865] I, 320).



most perfect Being. While it is impossible here on earth to attain the very essence of God comprehensively, it is nevertheless better to know Him even by imperfect cognition than to know comprehensively the universe which He created.<sup>140</sup>

While these salient features relative to the formation of concepts expressive of the divine attributes are found either expressed separately or involved implicitly in many statements of the Fathers, including St. Augustine, they have been formulated into a theological principle by Pseudo-Dionysius (about 500).<sup>141</sup> According to him and the Greek Fathers, a knowledge of God is acquired by affirmation or causality (θέσις or αἰτία), by negation (ἀφαίρεσις), by intensification (ὑπεροχή). Thus it was the contention of the Fathers that the human intellect by a process of abstraction, elimination, and transcendence was able to obtain from the created universe already in this life a true, although analogical, knowledge of God. It is directly from Pseudo-Dionysius that the threefold mode of knowing God has been appropriated by the Scholastics and accepted as a fundamental rule; namely, that God is known upon earth by the powers of reason from the created universe *per negationem* (*per viam remotionis*) and *per causalitatem* (*per viam affirmationis*) and *per excessum* (*per viam eminentiae*).<sup>142</sup> This process of knowing God has become the accepted heritage of theologians and philosophers down to our times.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>140</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28, I ed. J. Zycha, 159-160): "Ex quo fit ut major ad illa invenienda sit labor, quam ad illum a quo facta sunt, cum sit incomparabili felicitate praestantius illum ex quantalacunque particula pia mente sentire, quam illa universa comprehendere."

<sup>141</sup> *De divinis nominibus*, 7, 3 (PG 3, 972): "... κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνεμὲν ἔν τῇ πάντων ἀφαιρέσει καὶ ὑπεροχῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ πάντων αἰτία." And again, *ibid.*, XIII, 3 (981): "Οὐδεμία δὲ μὴ μὴς, ἢ τριάς . . . ἐξάγει τὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα καὶ λόγον καὶ νοῦν κρυφίωτα τῆς ὑπὲρ πάντα ὑπερουσίως ὑπερούσης ὑπερθεότητος."

<sup>142</sup> For example, St. Thomas, *In Boeth. de Trinit.*, q. 1, a. 2; VI, 3. In I, dist. 35, q. 1, a. 1; *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 12; *Contra Gent.*, III, 49; lect. 6 in Rom. 1, 19; *De pob.*, q. 7, a. 5, ad 2; cf. H. Meyer, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* [tr. by Frederic Eckoff] (St. Louis: 1944), p. 234. The influence of Pseudo-Dionysius upon St. Thomas is evident from the fact that Aquinas quotes, according to Durantel, *Saint Thomas et le Pseudo-Denis* (Paris: 1919), 1702 passages from the Platonic mystic.

<sup>143</sup> Thus, for instance, Suarez, *Disp. Met.* 30, s. 12, n. 10 f.; J. Urraburu, *Theodicea* (Vallisoleti: 1899), I, 202-205; P. Descoqs, *Praelectiones theologiae naturalis* (Paris: 1932-5), II, 788; G. Esser, *Theologia Naturalis* (Techny, Ill.: 1949), pp. 164 ff.

The early Fathers, grappling with pagan religions based upon and filled with false and distorted notions of deity, were zealous for the purity and loftiness of the concept of their God. They made every effort to keep it clear of created admixtures, and especially of anthropomorphic elements. From the warfare of religious ideas, the concept of the patristic God became comprehensive, well-defined, a living and dynamic factor in their religion. He is a God of all perfections; in each perfection He is infinite; consequently there is no composition in God.

The early Greek Fathers appropriated a term to express this purity, holiness, and perfection of God. The term *ὑπεροχή* occurring in classical Greek in the sense of prominence, preeminence, superiority, became a stock word or almost a technical term to describe the infinite perfection of God. Latin translators render it by *magnitudo*, *excellencia*, *praestantia*, but the most apt word to bring out its meaning is transcendence.<sup>144</sup> It occurs as early as Irenaeus;<sup>145</sup> it is found in the pseudo-Clementine homilies,<sup>146</sup> in the writings of St. Clement of Alexandria,<sup>147</sup> Origen,<sup>148</sup> Theodoret,<sup>149</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Cf. G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 26.

<sup>145</sup> *Adv. Haer.*, V, 2, 3 (PG 7, 1127): "out of His transcendence (*ἐκ τῆς ἐκείνου ὑπεροχῆς*), not out of our own nature, do we possess eternal continuance."

<sup>146</sup> *Hom.* 10, 19 (PG 2, 269 f.): "He who would worship God ought before all else to know what is peculiar to God alone, which cannot pertain to another, that looking at his peculiarity and not finding it in any other, he may not be seduced in ascribing deity to another. This is peculiar to God, that He alone is, as the maker of all, so also the best of all. That which makes is indeed superior in power to that which is made; that which is boundless is superior in magnitude to that which is bounded; in respect of beauty, that which is comeliest; in respect of happiness, that which is most blessed; in respect of understanding, that which is most perfect. And in like manner in other respects He incomparably possesses transcendence (*ἀπαράβλητος τὴν ὑπεροχὴν ἔχει*). Since then, as I said, this quality, to be the best of all, is peculiar to God, and the all-containing world was made by Him, none of the things made by Him can come into equal comparison with Him."

<sup>147</sup> *Stromata*, VII, 5 (PG 9, 437; GCS 3 ed. O Stählin, 20), arguing against idolatry says: "What product of builders and masons and mechanical craft could be holy? Are not they better thinkers who regard the sky and the firmament, and indeed the whole universe and totality of things, as a worthy manifestation of God's transcendence? (*ἄξιον ηἰρησάμενοι τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπεροχῆς*).

<sup>148</sup> *On St. John* 2:11 (PG 14, 145; GCS 3 ed. E. Preuschen, 74): "... τῇ ἐν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν ὑπεροχὴν νοήσας τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ θεοῦ."

<sup>149</sup> *History of the Church*, I, 3 (PG 82, 897; GCS ed. L. Parmentier, 16), speaking of the sonship of Jesus Christ, says: "Wherefore it can be seen that

Pseudo-Dionysius,<sup>150</sup> St. Maximus;<sup>151</sup> it survived to the time of St. John Damascene, who was the last Greek Father and the greatest compiler of Greek tradition.<sup>152</sup> The term is even frequently qualified by such adjectives as incomparable and ineffable, in order to bring out its absolute contrast with creatures.

The gist of the assertions that the Fathers made in connection with the use of this term is that God is incomparably perfect above all creatures and created perfections. They explicitly state, or at least insinuate, that whatever excellence is found in creation originates from the divine perfection and is founded in it. Moreover, they assert that there is an impassable abyss between God the Creator and creation, without, however, excluding God from His providential cares and operations in the universe.<sup>153</sup> The reasons that they adduce for the difference of perfections between God and creatures are immutability and self-sufficiency in God; whereas creatures are changeable and dependent on a higher cause.<sup>154</sup> Ultimately, they reduce the differences to two different types of beings or existences that are predicated of God and the creature analogously. God is His own being and existence; the creature has being and existence by participation.

By virtue of the divine transcendence God cannot be confined to the dimensions of place nor subject to the duration of time. Divine omnipresence and eternity are not only doctrines of Holy Writ but also postulates of reason. They are necessarily consequent upon the theological assumption that the Supreme Being must be a most perfect being. That God was divested by the

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the sonship of our Savior has nothing in common with the sonship of others. For just as it has been shown that His inexplicable subsistence (*ὑπόστασις*) is superior by incomparable transcendence (*ἀσυγκρίτως ὑπεροχῇ*) to all things, upon which He has bestowed their being, so also His sonship which is according to the nature (*κατὰ φύσιν*) of the paternal divinity exceeds by a certain ineffable excellence [transcendence] (*ἀλέκτως ὑπεροχῇ*) those who are adopted by him into sonship."

<sup>150</sup> *On the Divine Names*, 7, 3 (MG 3, 869).

<sup>151</sup> St. Maximus, *Commentary*, IV, 3 (PG 4, 244).

<sup>152</sup> *Orthodox Faith*, I, 12 (PG 94, 845): "because He is above all things in a transcendental way (*ἀλλ' ὅτι πάντων ὑπεροχικῶς τῶν ὄντων ἐξήρηται*)."

<sup>153</sup> Cf. D. L. Prestige, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>154</sup> E.g., Origen, *loc. cit.*; Theodoret, *loc. cit.*: "the immutable is perfect by nature; these [creatures], however, since they can change . . . , need His help."

Fathers of the limitations involved in place and time solely on the rational basis of His infinite perfection is evident from their writings.

Speaking of God containing all things, St. Irenaeus asserts that His power is infinite, not only exceeding the capacity of the mind and expression, time and place, but also transcending all fullness and perfection.<sup>155</sup> St. Basil, likewise, connects an uncircumscriptive and ubiquitous presence with the notion of the highest being when he states: "Wherefore it cannot happen that he who hears the word 'Spirit' (viz., God) conceives a nature that is circumscribed in place, or subject to changes and alterations, or altogether like to a creature; but proceeding in thought to that which is the highest, he necessarily thinks of an intelligent substance infinite in power, uncircumscribed by magnitude, nor subject to the dimensions of time or the world, having and distributing generously the good."<sup>156</sup> When Origen says that God cannot be in a corporeal place, he argues implicitly from the perfection of God against such a presence and explicitly from the imperfections of beings subject to local presences. Every such being is divisible, material, and corruptible, whereas God as a most perfect being must be indivisible, immaterial and incorruptible.<sup>157</sup>

The patristic principle for arriving at a sublimated and yet analogous conception of God by the powers of reason may be summarized in the words of St. Ambrose, who had such a powerful and immediate influence on the religious mind of St. Augustine. The Bishop of Milan states that whatever is conceived as being more religious and pious, whatever is thought of as more excellent and sublime, that is to be understood as becoming God.<sup>158</sup> St. Hilary writes that when we form a concept of God we must be

<sup>155</sup> St. Irenaeus, *Fragm. 6, Ex Serm., ad Dimetrium* (PG 7, 1231; ed. Harvey, II, 478): "Nam proprium hoc est operationis Dei, non in infinitatem sensus tantum progredi, aut mentem etiam transgredi, rationem et orationem, tempus et locum et omne aevum; verum etiam excedere substantiam et plenitudinem seu perfectionem."

<sup>156</sup> S. Basil, *On the Holy Ghost*, 19, 22 (PG 32, 107).

<sup>157</sup> Origen, *On Prayer*, 23, 3 (PG 11, 488; GCS 2 ed. P. Koetschau, 351).

<sup>158</sup> *De fide*, I, 16, 106 (PL 16, 576; ed. Ballerini, *S. Ambrosii opera omnia* [Milani: 1875 ff.], IV, 597): "Quidquid religiosius sentiri potest, quidquid praestantius ad decorem, quidquid sublimius ad potestatem, hoc Deo intelligas convenire."



aware that this concept is altogether insufficient and that true knowledge of God must transcend the idea which we have formed of God.<sup>159</sup> While creation, with man as its crowning point, is an ample source from which reason can draw a knowledge of God's attributes and perfection, the Fathers do not exclude but rather rely upon the revelation contained in Sacred Scripture as another parallel source from which that same knowledge can be obtained, supplemented, and corroborated.

St. Augustine was approximating this line of thought long established in Catholic tradition even before he approached the Church's baptismal font. In the history of his soul, portrayed so vividly in the *Confessions*, he tells us that, even in his earlier years, when he seekingly traversed the paths of error and heresy, he was wont to conceive of God in the light of perfection. Nothing could be thought of as being better or more perfect than God, "For never yet was, nor will be, a soul able to conceive of anything better than Thou, who art the highest and best good."<sup>160</sup> In this capacity, God is "not good by a good that is other than Himself, but the good of all good."<sup>161</sup> We are reminded of Plato's *Idea of the Good*, which, if not a god, is higher than a god in the hierarchy of Platonic values, because it is the highest reality.<sup>162</sup> Hence, according to the teaching of St. Augustine, when men endeavor to represent God to themselves, they try to conceive of a nature than which nothing more excellent or more exalted exists.

When the one God of gods is thought of, even by those who believe in, invoke, and worship other gods . . . , He is considered in such a way that the very thought tries to conceive a nature which is more excellent and more sublime than all others. . . . Those who by means of their intellect strive to visualize what God is, place Him above not only all visible and corporeal natures, but even all intellectual and spiritual na-

<sup>159</sup> *Ps.* 144:6 (CSEL 22, ed. A. Zingerle, 831 f): "omnem intelligentiam infinitae hujus in se qualitatis excedens." Also *De Trinit.*, II, 6 (*Hilarii Pictaviensis Opera*, studio Monachorum O. S. B. [Veronae: 1730], I, 30 C); cf. P. Smulders, *La doctrine trinitaire de S. Hilaire de Poitiers* (Romae: 1944), p. 142.

<sup>160</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 4, 6 (PL 32, 735; ed. M. Skutella, 129): "Neque enim ulla anima unquam potuit, poteritve cogitare aliquid, quod sit te melius, qui summum et optimum bonum es."

<sup>161</sup> *De Trinit.*, VIII, 3, 4 (PL 42, 949).

<sup>162</sup> E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), pp. 25 ff.



tures, above all changeable things. All men engage in contest over the excellence of God, and no one can be found to believe a being is God if there is any being more excellent. Hence, all men agree that He is God whom they esteem above all things.<sup>163</sup>

Augustine ascribes to God that quality or attribute which is better, more noble, more perfect than the opposite.<sup>164</sup> By way of example he tells us that of the two notions, corruptible and incorruptible, which his mind formed—of course, on the basis of the corruptible mundane objects which surrounded him—the more or most perfect is that which is contained in the notion of the incorruptible. Hence God must be incorruptible. In like manner, he argues concerning the notions of violability and inviolability and of mutability and immutability.<sup>165</sup> This process of reasoning furnishes us with an example of the manner in which St. Augustine's mind worked toward a principle of thought long in use in patristic theology against the pagan method of ascribing the same attributes, and oftentimes in equal measure, to deity and to men.

This method of arguing from the very idea of God, or the *Summum Bonum*, is not to be confused with the *ratio Anselmi*, the so-called ontological proof of St. Anselm<sup>166</sup> for the existence of the Supreme Being.<sup>167</sup> St. Augustine may be considered as the forerunner of the great Benedictine saint of the eleventh century in

<sup>163</sup> *De doctr. christian.*, I, 7, 7 (PL 34, 22); tr. by J. J. Gavigan, *Writings of St. Augustine*, in *The Fathers of the Church* (New York: 1947), vol. IV, p. 32.

<sup>164</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1077); *Confess.*, VII, 4, 6 (PL 32, 735; ed. M. Skutella, 129).

<sup>165</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 1, 1 (PL 32, 733; ed. M. Skutella, 124): "et te (Deum) incorruptibilem, et inviolabilem, et incommutabilem, totis medullis credebam; quia, nesciens unde et quomodo, plane tamen videbam et certus eram, id quod corrumpi potest, deterius esse quam id quod corrumpi non potest; et quod violari non potest, incunctanter praeponere violabili; et quod nullam patitur mutationem, melius esse quam id quod mutari potest." Cf. also *ibid.*, 4, 6 (col. 735-36). Another example: *In Io. Ev. tr.* I, 8 (PL 35, 1383): "Et si dicam tibi, Deus commutabilis est, an incommutabilis? respondebis statim, Absit ut ego vel credam vel sentiam commutabilem Deum: incommutabilis est Deus."

<sup>166</sup> *Proslogion*, 2-4 (PL 158, 227-29); cf. G. Esser, *Theologia Naturalis* (Techy, Ill.: 1949), p. 18.

<sup>167</sup> Thus, for instance, in the opinion of W. P. Tolley, *The Idea of God in the Philosophy of St. Augustine* (New York: 1930), p. 84: "While the form of the Proslogion proof is undoubtedly original, the argument itself is but a new arrangement of Augustine's thought."

this matter, and of the many later philosophers, such as Descartes,<sup>168</sup> and Leibniz<sup>169</sup> who have formulated substantially the same argument in some other form. Even in our own times philosophers will be found who, in one way or another, renovate the same proof, and consider it valid.<sup>170</sup> Others without intending to do so, fall into it.<sup>171</sup> However, St. Augustine did not intend to propose an ontological argument for God's existence, even in such passages where the very idea of God seems to imply or involve the notion of existence.<sup>172</sup> In all his proofs for God's existence from reason, St. Augustine presupposes that the mind already knows from faith what is examined by reason.<sup>173</sup> Moreover, the principal purpose for the use of reason in probing into the concept of God is to bring out the purity and the excellence of the divine attributes rather than to demonstrate the actual existence of the Supreme Being.

It is of prime importance, St. Augustine admonishes, that all classes of men, whether small or great, youths or adults, think rightly of God.<sup>174</sup> He admits that the task is not equally easy for every type and age of man. The mature Augustine must have always remained aware of how the youthful Augustine sought and labored in order to conceive correctly of God. In the *Confessions*, he trenchantly characterizes the whole early period of his life when he says: "My error was my God."<sup>175</sup> For that reason he suggests that a certain margin be allowed to the young for their

<sup>168</sup> *Meditationes de prima philosophia*, 5 (ed. Adam, IX, 52 ff.); cf. B. Rand, *Modern Classical Philosophers* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1908), pp. 142 ff.

<sup>169</sup> *Monadologie*, n. 45 (ed. Erdmann, p. 708).

<sup>170</sup> For instance, Ragay, cf. P. Descoqs, *Praelectiones theologiae naturalis* (Paris: 1932-1935), I, 616; C. Hartshorne, "The Formal Validity and Real Significance of the Ontological Argument," *The Philosophical Review*, LIII (1944), 225-45.

<sup>171</sup> Such is the case with B. Schuler, *Die Gotteslehre als Grundwissenschaft* (Würzburg-Paderborn: 1950), pp. 24-25, 126, 140, and passim. Cf. *Zeitschrift für kath. Theol.* LXXII (1950), 487-90.

<sup>172</sup> *De mor. Manich.*, III, 5 (PL 32, 1312).

<sup>173</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1943), pp. 13 ff.

<sup>174</sup> *De Sermone Domini in monte*, II, 5, 18 (PL 34, 1277): "Convenit etiam gradibus religionis, et plurimum expedit, ut omnium sensibus et parvulorum et magnorum bene sentiatur de Deo."

<sup>175</sup> *Confess.*, IV, 7, 12 (PL 32, 698; ed. M. Skutella, 63): "Et error meus erat Deus meus."

intellectual weaknesses and deficiencies, permitting them for a time to draw themselves gradually from their vagaries to a genuine notion of a true God. Thus for those who are immersed in the beauties of the visible world and who are unable to conceive of objects in any other but a material form, he suggests that it is better to think of the material heavens than of the material earth, and that it is more tolerable to think of God in a corporeal form as being in heaven than as being in that same form on earth.

When such men arrive at a knowledge of the dignity of the soul and perceive that through its spiritual nature it excels over corporeal things, then they should seek God as a spiritual entity in the soul of man. When they learn the difference between the souls of sinners and those of the just, it is in the latter that they must seek the special presence of the divine inhabitation.<sup>176</sup> This is merely a practical example of the way in which the ruder and more sluggish intellect must gradually detach itself from the more proximate and material concepts in order to approach to a conception of the spiritual and perfect God.

The point of departure for the groping youthful Augustine, and even more for the mature Bishop of Hippo, in his speculations on God, is the rational, metaphysical conception of God as a most perfect being—as the *summum bonum*,<sup>177</sup> as the *summum et optimum bonum*,<sup>178</sup> as the *summus et solus et verus Deus*,<sup>179</sup> as the *unus Deus verus atque perfectus*.<sup>180</sup> This is true not only of God as such, but also of each attribute or perfection of God. As we shall see, the attribute of presence is proper to God. It is a concept that is

<sup>176</sup> *De Sermone Domini in monte*, II, 5, 18 (PL 34, 1277): "Et ideo qui visibilibus adhuc pulchritudinibus dediti sunt, nec possunt aliquid incorporeum cogitare, quoniam necesse est coelum praeferant terrae; tolerabilior est opinio eorum, si Deum quem adhuc corporaliter cogitant, in coelo potius credant esse, quam in terra; ut cum aliquando cognoverint dignitatem animae coeleste etiam corpus excedere, magis eum quaerant in anima, quam in corpore etiam coelesti; et cum cognoverint quantum distet inter peccatorum animas et justorum, sicut non audebant, cum adhuc carnaliter saperent, eum in terra collocare, sed in coelo, sic postea meliori fide vel intelligentia magis eum in animis justorum quam in peccatorum requirant."

<sup>177</sup> *De natura boni*, 22 (PL 42, 558; CSEL 25, II ed. J. Zycha, 864); *De serm. Dom. in monte*, I, 3, 10 (PL 34, 1234),

<sup>178</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 4, 6 (PL 32, 735; ed. M. Skutella, 129).

<sup>179</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 1, 1 (PL 32, 733; ed. M. Skutella, 124).

<sup>180</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1077).

derived from temporal and spatial presences, but it is purified from the imperfections and limitations proper both to corporeal and created spiritual presences before it is predicated of God in all its purity and perfection.

Hardly a Father was in a better position than St. Augustine to realize how important the purity and orthodoxy, the fullness and vitality of the concept of God are for a true and vital religion.<sup>181</sup> Augustine's road in quest of religious truth was long and circuitous. It started when he neglected the Church of his mother Monica. He traversed the basic errors and heresies of the principal schools of thought prevalent in his time before he was led back to the Church of his childhood. In all of his searchings was the quest and longing for a knowledge of the true God and the religion that was bound up with Him.<sup>182</sup>

To summarize, the following are the sources for development of St. Augustine's theology on God and in particular on the divine omnipresence: 1. he appeals to Sacred Scripture to demonstrate and explain the manner of God's presence; 2. he leans heavily upon the tradition of patristic thought which was developed and accumulated throughout three centuries before him; 3. in union with these two sources he amplifies, perfects, and argues for God's attributes and perfections by the powers and processes of reason.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. F. Dander, *Christus Alles in Allen* (Innsbruck: 1939), p. 32: "Das ist nun unsagbar wichtig, dass wir eine wirklich hohe, möglichst lebendige Gottesidee in unserer Seele tragen und der Menschen darbieten. Denn von der Gestalt unseres Gottesbildes hängt naturgemäss die ganze Eigenart unseres religiösen Lebens ab." S. J. Grabowski, "For a Vital Concept of a Living God," *The Catholic University Bulletin* XIII (1946), 9: "It is of paramount importance for the religion of man that above all an exalted and vitalized notion of God be formed in his mind. The vitality, earnestness, and depth of one's religion follow the type of image of God that is conceived and entertained in the soul. If the conception of God is beclouded, one-sided or even distorted, it will have as its counterpart a more or less uncertain, one-sided, and distorted kind of religion." See also *Catechismus Romanus*, I, 2, 5-9, 11-13; III, 1, 3-10; IV, 9, 18 f.; B. Schuler, *Die Gotteslehre als Grundwissenschaft* (Würzburg-Paderborn: 1950).

<sup>182</sup> A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (London: 1896-99), V, 64: "He [Augustine] knew his heart to be his worst possession, and the living God to be his highest good." Cf. also K. Adam, *Die geistige Entwicklung des hl. Augustinus* (Augsburg: 1931); V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee: 1944), p. 203.



### CHAPTER III

## THE FORMATION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE

THE concept of presence constitutes one of the essential and primary traits of Augustine's notion of God. On various occasions when he defines or describes the Supreme Being he stresses the ubiquitous presence of God as well as the peculiar mode of that presence. When men, he says, think "of a certain substance—living, perpetual, omnipotent, infinite, everywhere present, everywhere whole, nowhere included,"—when they combine all these perfections in thought, they are entertaining a notion of God.<sup>1</sup> Again, when he endeavors to define God descriptively and at the same time to remove all the imperfections inherent in man from the perfect substance of God, he says: "What, therefore, we do not find in that which is our own best, we ought not to seek in Him who is far better than the best of ours; that so we may understand God, if we are able, and as far as we are able, as good without quality, great without quantity, a creator without indigence, ruling but from no position, containing all things without 'having' them, totally everywhere without place, eternal without time, making things that are changeable, without change of Himself, and not being subject to the influence of whatever a thing."<sup>2</sup> Thus St. Augustine removes from God the "accidents" of the Aristotelian categories of logic.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 1, 8 (PL 35, 1383).

<sup>2</sup> *De Trinit.*, V, 1 (PL 42, 912).

<sup>3</sup> These predicates are listed in Aristotle's *Topics*, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by R. McKeon (New York: 1941), p. 195: "These are ten in number: Essence, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, activity, passivity. For the accident and genus and property and definition of anything will always be in one of these categories." Of this number essence is not an accident, the other nine are.

Predicated of created things, presence is a perfection. When asserted of God, the limitations and imperfections of created presences must be removed from the uncreated presence; in other words, presence must be predicated of God in the highest degree and in a pre-eminent way. The efforts of the Bishop in the direction of the sublimation of the divine presence are constant notwithstanding the difficulty that he encounters in expressing it by human words. God is all-present, or, to use the superlative form employed by St. Augustine, He is most present <sup>4</sup> when compared of course with the manner in which created beings are present. Let us notice the expressions that Augustine uses to designate or to describe this divine presence in creation. God, he says, is everywhere,<sup>5</sup> is present everywhere,<sup>6</sup> is diffused everywhere,<sup>7</sup> is diffused through all things,<sup>8</sup> fills all things.<sup>9</sup> An equivalent assertion is made in negative form when he states that God is everywhere because He is absent nowhere <sup>10</sup> and in no part of anything.<sup>11</sup>

The divine presence is thus most perfect, and is expressed by the perfection of extension and the perfection of intensity. Extensively, God pervades the whole universe, and every minutest part of it, by being present to each particular thing. Intensively God is present to the whole universe and to each individual thing in the manner that the Creator and self-subsisting Being alone is able to be present to them, and without whom they would not be able to subsist. He is wholly and most present to all beings and to each one of them, and by the power of that presence keeps them together and sustains them in existence.

When Augustine speaks of an ubiquitous diffusion of God in the universe, he takes occasion again and again, not only in the Epistle on the *Presence of God* but elsewhere in his writings,<sup>12</sup> to warn us

<sup>4</sup> *Confess.*, VI, 3, 4 (PL 32, 721; ed. M. Skutella, 183): "altissime et proxime, secretissime et praesentissime . . ."; *ibid.*, I, 4, 4 (PL 32, 662-63; ed. M. Skutella, 3): "secretissime et praesentissime . . ."

<sup>5</sup> *Ep.* 187, 5, 17 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 95).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 41 (PL p. 848; CSEL p. 118); cf. *Enar. 2 in Ps. XXX*, 1, 7 (PL 231).

<sup>7</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 11 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 90).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 14 (PL p. 837; CSEL p. 92): "diffusus per cuncta."

<sup>9</sup> *Confess.*, I, 4, 4 (PL 32, 662-63; ed. M. Skutella, 3).

<sup>10</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 18 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 96).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 17 (PL p. 838; CSEL p. 95): "Quia nulli parti rerum absens est."

<sup>12</sup> Cf., for example, *Enar. 2 in Ps. XXX*, 1, 7 (PL 36, 231).

against conceiving this diffusion in a material way; that is, as quantity which is distended by its bulk through distant spaces.<sup>13</sup> By way of examples, St. Augustine asserts that God is not spread out in space in the manner of grosser matter, such as soil, liquid, or even the finer substances, such as air and light. All such bodies, no matter how fine and tenuous, are nevertheless corporeal and consequently have material quantity and extension. They are therefore subject to the laws of quantity: they are divisible, so that their magnitude is lesser in a part than it is in the whole.<sup>14</sup> Such is not the case with God. The presence of all beings constituted of quantitative matter is such as to be measured, whole by the whole place which it occupies, and each part by the corresponding part of space or place; as a consequence, the whole of that being cannot be in any one part of the space. This Augustinian law for corporeal entities, explicitly stated or implicitly contained in many of his statements to illustrate the manner in which God is not and cannot be present, has become a heritage of the Schoolmen and a fundamental part of their cosmology.

This is not the way in which God is present in the universe. He does not fill space or occupy place; "nor does He need aerial space as a place"<sup>15</sup> in which to be contained or located. His essence, as we shall see, belongs to a different category from that of quantitative being. Hence it is governed by different cosmological laws of presence.

This is the reason why the Saint admonishes us to abstain from carnal conceptions<sup>16</sup> and corporeal imagination<sup>17</sup> if we are rightly to conceive of God as being everywhere. To form a conception of God in such a manner as to see in imagination, diverse members of the body located in different places according to the likeness of humans, to envisage a figure and a form, to perceive this entirety as

<sup>13</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 11 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 90); 13, 41 (PL p. 848; CSEL p. 118); 4, 14 (PL p. 837; CSEL p. 92).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 11 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 90): "ne . . . opinemur Deum per cuncta diffundi, sicut humus aut humor aut aer aut lux ista diffunditur—omnis enim hujuscemodi magnitudo, minor est in sui parte quam in toto, . . ."

<sup>15</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 19, (PL 33, 839; CSEL 57, IV, 98): "nec spatio aërio tamquam loco suo indiget. . . ."

<sup>16</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 11 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 90): "carnali resistendum est cogitationi et mens a corporis sensibus evocanda."

<sup>17</sup> *Enar.* 2 in Ps. XXX, 1, 7 (PL 36, 231): "Omnino nihil horum cogitent humana phantasmata."

remaining in place or moving through places, is sheer anthropomorphism. This condition, Augustine allows, is understandable in the little ones<sup>18</sup> and is found in the carnal man,<sup>19</sup> but must be corrected in more mature and spiritual thinkers. Spiritual substances, if the soul is to be taken as an example, cannot be conceived in the form of those corporeal images that are perceived by the senses, but they must be arrived at in our mind by a strictly intellectual process (*mente intelligi*) and felt in life by a psychological experience (*vita sentiri*)<sup>20</sup> that is determined by consciousness.

From this it is evident that although St. Augustine frequently speaks of the diffusion of God throughout the universe, he does not mean to say that God is extended in the physical universe in any material or quasi-material sense. Furthermore, it is clear that God is not enclosed even as subtle and pneumatic matter in a grosser material universe after the manner of the rays of light penetrating material substances. Therefore, the divine pervasion of the material universe is in no wise to be conceived in the sense of material immanence, which would involve a fusion and identification of both. The very nature of God precludes such a fusion with nature and necessitates transcendence over the universe.

St. Augustine is always conscious of the necessity of using human concepts and forms of speech that are immersed in, and measured by the limitations of the finite and created to express concepts of God's infinite and most perfect being and existence. Of the two—speech and concepts—he feels that speech is less adequate than thought to express the perfections of God, who “is conceived more truly than He is expressed (by speech), and He *is* more truly than He is conceived.”<sup>21</sup> Anent human concepts, attri-

<sup>18</sup> *Sermo* 23, 6, 6 (PL 38, 157–58): “Si ergo, ut dixi, parvulus ille noster talem crediderit Deum, habentem certis corporis sui locis membra disposita, circumscriptum figura, terminatum forma, localiter manentem, localiter se moventem, . . . quid facit modo ille parvulus?”

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 5 (157): “Ergo si hoc putaverit homo carnalis, quia Dei natura atque substantia distincta membris est, determinata forma, circumscripta quantitate manens loco, quid cum illo facio?”

<sup>20</sup> *De origine animae hominis* or the *Letter to St. Jerome*, Ep. 166, 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL 44 ed. A. Goldbacher, III, 553), where speaking of the incorporeal nature of the soul, he says: “quae veraciter non possit in aliqua phantasia corporalium imaginum, quas per carnis sensus percipimus, cogitari, sed mente intelligi, vitaeque sentiri.” Cf. also *Sermo* 53, 6, 7 (PL 38, 367).

<sup>21</sup> *De Trinit.*, VII, 4, 7 (PL 42, 939): “Verius enim cogitatur Deus quam dicitur, et verius est quam cogitatur.”



butes drawn from the universe can be predicated of God because perfections seen in creatures are a reflection of the perfections of the Creator, but none of them are worthily asserted of Him.<sup>22</sup> The divine nature transcends all human words, and therefore defies all human description. Yet we must express ourselves concerning His Being,<sup>23</sup> inadequately indeed, in human fashion and with human words. Augustine confesses to the ineffability of God<sup>24</sup> and states that it is easier to say what God is not than what He is.<sup>25</sup>

This is the reason why St. Augustine made extensive use of the process of negation when expressing himself about the Supreme Being.<sup>26</sup> Drawing his concepts of attributes from the finite universe, he found it more correct to state that such an attribute could not be simply predicated of the transcendent God. He pointed out how distant from God those concepts must be that draw their origin from the senses of the flesh and that are dependent on material objects. This realization of the Bishop of Hippo became the doctrine of the Scholastics when they state that such predicates drawn from finite and imperfect creatures can be attributed to God only in an analogous capacity.

It is true that St. Augustine employs in no small measure the philosophical technique of Plotinus in expressing the incomprehensibility and ineffability of God.<sup>27</sup> Plotinus lays down the principle in his teaching on God that the "One" cannot be defined in positive terms and that it can only be described in a negative manner.<sup>28</sup> On account of this likeness of approach to God, Grand-

<sup>22</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr. XIII*, 5 (PL 35, 1495): "Omnia possunt dici de Deo, et nihil digne dicitur de Deo."

<sup>23</sup> *De Gen. contra Manich.*, I, VIII, 14 (PL 34, 180): "Nihil enim de Deo digne dici potest. Nobis tamen ut nutriamur, et ad ea perveniamus quae nullo humano sermone dici possunt, ea dicuntur quae capere possumus."

<sup>24</sup> *De Trinit.*, VII, 4, 7 (PL 42, 939): "Itaque loquendi causa de ineffabilibus, ut fari aliquo modo possemus, quod effari nullo modo possumus. . . ."

<sup>25</sup> *Enar. in Ps. LXXXV*, 12 (PL 37, 1090): "Deus ineffabilis est, facilius dicimus quid non sit, quam quid sit." Cf. *De Trinit.*, V, 1, 2 (PL 42, 911-12).

<sup>26</sup> *Enar. 2 in Ps. XXVI*, 8 (PL 36, 203): "Excedat cor vestrum omnia usitata, et excedat intentio universas cogitationes vestras solemnes ex carne, eductas a sensibus carnis, et imaginantes nescio quae phantasmata. Totum ab animo rejicite, quidquid occurrerit negate: cognoscite infirmitatem cordis vestri, et quia vel occurrit quod cogitare possetis, dicite: Non est illud; non enim si illud esset, mihi jam occurrisset."

<sup>27</sup> Cf. C. Boyer, *L'idée de vérité dans la philosophie de Saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1940), p. 126.

<sup>28</sup> *Enn.*, VI, 8, 11, ed. Volkmann, II, 493.

george maintains that the God of Augustine is no other than the deity of Plotinus.<sup>29</sup> While there is an appreciable resemblance in the negative terms and formulas employed by both writers, and while the influence of Plotinus upon Augustine is readily conceded,<sup>30</sup> it is to be noted that this negative philosophy on the conception of God was common to the Greek Fathers of the Church. Such negative processes and formulas are indispensable for arriving at a knowledge of God's perfections, since St. Augustine and the Fathers proceed from the tangible and visible perfections of the world and ascend to the domain of the Supreme Spirit.

Plotinus and Augustine differ in the predication of positive attributes of their respective deities. In these attributions we perceive the Augustine of the Scriptures and tradition portraying an image of a God well delineated in Christian literature. Moreover, St. Augustine indisputably rises above the Neoplatonists by his masterfully developed Christian doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>31</sup> Finally, he is above their reach in his doctrine of the Incarnation, in which he teaches, in opposition to Philo, Plato, and Plotinus, that the divine and the human may subsist in one entity, and that the divine need not be contaminated by the contact with the flesh.<sup>32</sup>

In his Letter *On the Presence of God* to the simple Dardanus, St. Augustine warns against a corporeal or anthropomorphic conception of God and His presence. This warning reflects St. Augustine's own previous condition of mind, as well as that of the pagan era preceding and surrounding him. The younger Augustine himself entertained an image of a material God, and it was only with a great effort and gradually that he was able to extricate himself from it. In the long list of erroneous doctrines that were in circulation up to the time of the Saint, there is enumerated the heresy that conceived God as having a body according to the likeness of corruptible man. A catalogue of such errors was made by St.

<sup>29</sup> L. Grandgeorge, *Saint Augustin et le Néoplatonisme* (Paris: 1896), p. 68.

<sup>30</sup> H. Weinand, *Die Gottesidee der Grundzug der Weltanschauung des hl. Augustinus* (Paderborn: 1910), asserts that Augustine conceived of God in the fashion of the Neoplatonic "One," which however was transformed and enriched by Christian elements.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster i. W.: 1927).

<sup>32</sup> *De civ. Dei* IX, 15-17 (PL 41, 268-71; ed. Dombart-Kalb, 387-92).

Augustine himself and is an indication of the pains with which he undertook to sift error from orthodoxy. He adds that his fore-runner in cataloguing heresies, Epiphanius, did not brand with the name of heretic those guilty of this misconception of God, because of their simplicity.<sup>33</sup>

As to St. Augustine's own precedents, as he himself confesses, there was a time when his mind could not conceive of any other substance but that which can be seen by the eyes. In the earliest stages of his religious and intellectual growth, he could imagine God only in the form of a human body. Later, in the Manichean period of his life, although he did not conceive God under the form of a human body, he thought of Him as something definitely corporeal and filling all space. "One who has parts extended in length and breadth . . . whose being was bulk."<sup>34</sup> His mind at this stage was incapable of forming a concept of any being that did not have extension and location in space. He was of the opinion that whatever was not found in space, whatever did not occupy a place in this universe, could not be reality; it would necessarily be a nonentity. To use Augustine's own example: if a body is taken from its place, the place devoid of the content remains itself, but the place is empty as a "spacious nothing."

Dead now was that evil and abominable youth of mine, and I was passing into early manhood; as I increased in years, the fouler I became in vanity, who could not conceive of any substance but such as I saw with my own eyes. I thought not of Thee, O God, under the form of human body. Since the time I began to hear something of wisdom, I always avoided this; and I rejoiced to have found the same in the faith of our spiritual mother, Thy Catholic Church. But what else to imagine Thee I knew not. And I, a man, and such a man, sought to conceive of Thee, the sovereign and only true God; and I did in my inmost heart believe that Thou wert incorruptible, and inviolable, and unchangeable; because not knowing whence or how, yet most plainly did I see and feel sure that that which may be corrupted must be worse than that which cannot, and what cannot be violated did I without hesitation

<sup>33</sup> *De haeresibus*, 50 (PL 42, 39): ". . . alii vocant Anthropomorphitas, quoniam Deum sibi fingunt cogitatione carnali in similitudinem hominis corruptibilis: quod rusticitati eorum tribuit Epiphanius, parcens eis ne dicantur haeretici."

<sup>34</sup> *Confess.* III, 7, 12 (PL 32, 688; ed. Skutella, 45-46).

prefer before that which can, and deemed that which suffers **no change** to be better than that which is changeable. Violently did my heart cry out against all my phantasms, and with this one blow I endeavored to beat away from the eye of my mind all that unclean crowd which fluttered around it. And lo, being scarce put off, they, in the twinkling of an eye, pressed in multitudes around me, dashed against my face, and beclouded it; so that, though I thought not of Thee under the form of a human body, yet I was constrained to image Thee to be something corporeal in space, either diffused beyond it—even that incorruptible, inviolable, and unchangeable, which I preferred to the corruptible, violable, and changeable; since whatever I conceived, deprived of this space, appeared as nothing to me, yes, altogether nothing, not even a void, as if a body were removed from its place and the place should remain empty of any body at all, whether earthy, terrestrial, watery, aerial, or celestial, but would remain a void place—a spacious nothing, as it were.<sup>35</sup>

This is the manner in which he represented God to himself in this period of his spiritual and philosophical quest. God as a Supreme Being had necessarily to be a cosmic Being, but Augustine's mind did not yet mature sufficiently to embrace God as a spirit. The philosopher Augustine saw God, therefore, as a huge corporeal entity penetrating through infinite spaces the whole mass of this universe and extending beyond it without end. With His quantitative substance, God penetrates the earth, the heavens, and all created objects in them. All creation terminated in God and was possessed by Him. But as far as God Himself was concerned, there was no termination of Him in creation and no enclosure of Him by the universe. The two terms "corporeity" and "infinite" appeared to be compatible to Augustine's mind at this period of his life, and could therefore be predicated of the substance of God without contradiction.

He illustrates this erroneous conception of a corporeal and yet all-penetrating God by analogies taken from the universe. Light and air, although they are rarified substances, are nevertheless two material entities. Air does not hamper the light of the sun from

<sup>35</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 1, 1 (PL 32, 733; ed. M. Skutella, 124-25); tr. from *Basic Writing of Saint Augustine*, ed. W. J. Oates (New York: 1948), p. 91; cf. *Confess.*, III, 6, 10 (PL 32, 686-87; ed. M. Skutella, 43-44): *Contra ep. Fundam.*, IV, 5 (PL 42, 175).



penetrating it, but the sun fills the terrestrial air with its luminousness and beauty. So also all terrestrial bodies, such as air, the heavens, the oceans, and the mass of the earth itself with all its component parts, in their finest particles as well as largest parts, are pervious to the penetrating presence of the so conceived corporeal God. These bodies are said to take in, to absorb the presence of God (*ad capiendum praesentiam tuam*). Augustine further explains this presence as being intrinsically a hidden inspiration (*occulta inspiratione*) and extrinsically an administration (*extrinsecus administrantem omnia*) of those created objects by God.<sup>36</sup>

At this early stage of his religious quest in his conception of a divine power that operates intrinsically in every part of the universe, and of a divine providence that guides every being in the cosmic complex, Augustine approximates the line of thought that is so conspicuous in Greek patristic theology. As yet Augustine did not attain their concept of a simple and spiritual God.

The youthful Augustine realized that a God imagined in the form of a material entity would be contained in greater measure in a large being than in a smaller one. To use his own example, there would be more of God by presence in an elephant than in a sparrow. He was aware also that one portion of the universe would contain one part of God, whereas another portion, or smaller portion of it, would contain another or smaller part of God. Thus as the universe is measurable and divisible, so would God also be measurable and divisible. Augustine's own penetrating description follows:

I therefore being thus gross-hearted, nor clear even to myself, whatsoever was not stretched over certain spaces, nor diffused, nor crowded together, nor swelled out, or which did not or could not receive some of these dimensions, I judged to be altogether nothing. For over such forms as my eyes are wont to range did my heart then range; nor did I see that this same observation, by which I formed those same images, was not of this kind, and yet it could not have formed them had not itself been something great. In like manner did I conceive of Thee, Life of my life, as vast through infinite spaces, on every side penetrating the whole mass of the world, and beyond it, all ways through immeasurable and boundless spaces; so that the earth should have Thee,

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

all things have Thee, and they bounded in Thee, but Thou nowhere. For as the body of this air which is above the earth does not prevent the light of the sun from passing through it, penetrating it, not by bursting or by cutting, but by filling it entirely, so I imagined the body, not of heaven, air, and seat only, but of the earth also, to be pervious to Thee, and in all its greatest parts as well as smallest penetrable to receive Thy presence, by a secret inspiration, both inwardly and outwardly governing all things which Thou has created. So I conjectured, because I was unable to think of anything else; for it was untrue. For in this way would a greater part of the earth contain a greater portion of Thee, and the less a lesser; and all things should so be full of Thee, as that the body of an elephant should contain more of Thee than that of a sparrow by how much larger it is, and occupies more room; and so shouldest Thou make the portions of Thyself present unto the several portions of the world, in pieces, great to the great, little to the little. But Thou art not such a one; nor hadst Thou as yet enlightened my darkness.<sup>37</sup>

The searching mind of Augustine furnishes us with another concrete example of a God extended through the created universe in the form of matter, and especially of His presence consequent upon such a material extension. God is imagined as an infinite corporeal substance encompassing in a physical way the whole universe and penetrating it. God appeared to him, to use his own example, to be like a sea without limits, extending itself boundlessly; while the universe was like a huge but finite sponge encompassed about and saturated through and through by the waters of the sea.

And I set in order before the view of my spirit the whole creation, and whatever we can discern in it, such as earth, sea, air, stars, trees, living creatures; and whatever in it we do not see, as the firmament of heaven, all the angels, too, and all the spiritual inhabitants thereof. But these very beings, as though they were bodies, my fancy disposed in such and such places, and I made one huge mass of all Thy creatures, distinguished according to the kinds of bodies—some of them being real bodies, some what I myself had feigned for spirits. And this mass I made huge—not as it was, which I could not know, but as large as I thought well, yet in every way finite. But Thee, O Lord, I imagined on every part environing and penetrating it, though in every way in-

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 (PL 32, 733; ed. M. Skutella, 125-26); tr., *ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

finite; as if there were a sea everywhere, and on every side through immensity nothing but an infinite sea; and it contained within itself some sponge, huge, though finite, so that the sponge would in all its parts be filled from the immeasurable sea. So I conceived Thy creation to be itself finite, and filled by Thee, the Infinite. And I said, Behold God, and behold what God hath created; and God is good, most mightily and incomparably better than all these; but yet He, who is good, hath created them good, and behold how He encircleth and filleth them.<sup>38</sup>

His mind at this period could not disentangle itself from material elements, but it had at least perceived that God could not have any limitations in His extension. Moreover, it was true that through this corporeal presence the universe with all its constituent parts could be said to be full of God. In this his mind rose above the requirements of a pagan conception of God, who was limited within parts of the universe, or who at most could be identified with the universe. In any case He was bounded, limited, and finite. One discerns therefore in the mind of Augustine a gradual elevation and ennobling of the primitive conception of a finite material being to an infinite material being. It still remained for him to burst the bonds of materiality in which his mind was enslaved.

During the Manichean (373-382) and the Academic (382-383) stages of his life, Augustine groped in religious darkness. His mind abounded in religious misconceptions primarily because of his gross and fundamental error concerning the nature of God. It was precisely in these periods that his mind could not raise itself above a material, corporeal God. "Thou wert not Thyself, but a mere phantom, and my error was my God."<sup>39</sup> In due time God was to cease to be "any solid or substantial thing."<sup>40</sup> His subsequent adherence to the Neoplatonic school of thought had thrown open a new vista of religious thought, especially through its presentation of God in a manner that was an innovation and an inspiration to the inquiring mind of Augustine.

The notion of God as a purely spiritual being,<sup>41</sup> entertained by the Neoplatonic philosophers,<sup>42</sup> was as revealing to Augustine as

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 5, 7 (PL 32, 736; ed. M. Skutella, 130); tr. *ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>39</sup> *Confess.*, IV, 7, 12 (PL 32, 698; ed. M. Skutella, 63).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *De beata vita*, I, 4 (PL 32, 961).

<sup>42</sup> The God of Plotinus, who is "the One" is sheer spirituality and should

it was fundamental to his religion. It was a turning point in his religious life. It was this truth of the pure spirituality of God that not only completely refashioned his notion of God, and consequently in due time his whole theology on God, but also directly paved the way either for his entry into the Catholic Church or for his understanding of the teaching of the Catholic Church. To his great delight he discovered that the God of the Catholic Church was a Spirit, a supreme Spirit, who was not confined to place but was present everywhere in His totality. "In this manner was I confounded and converted, and I rejoiced, O my God, that the one Church, the body of Thine only Son (wherein the name of Christ had been set upon me when an infant), did not appreciate these infantile trifles, nor maintained, in her sound doctrine, any tenet that would confine Thee, the Creator of all, in space—though ever so great and wide, yet bounded on all sides by the restraints of a human form."<sup>43</sup>

I heard him (St. Ambrose), indeed, every Lord's day, rightly dividing the word of truth among the people; and I was all the more convinced that all those knots of crafty calumnies, which those deceivers of ours had knit against the divine books, could be unravelled. But so soon as I understood, withal, that man made after the image of Him that created him was not so understood by Thy spiritual sons (whom of the Catholic Mother Thou hadst begotten again through grace), as though they believed and imagined Thee to be bounded by human form—although what was the nature of a spiritual substance I had not the faintest or dimmest suspicion—yet rejoicing, I blushed that for so many years I had barked, not against the Catholic faith, but against the fables of carnal imaginations. For I had been both impious and rash in this, that what I ought inquiring to have learnt, I had pronounced on condemning. For Thou, O most high and near, most secret and yet most present, who hast not limbs some larger some smaller, but wholly everywhere, and nowhere in space, nor art Thou of such corporeal form, yet hast Thou created man after Thine own image, and, behold, from head to foot is he confined by space.<sup>44</sup>

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therefore in no way be conceived as corporeal (*Enneads* VI, 9, 3 [ed. R. Volkmann, Leipzig: 2 vol., 1883-4, II, 511]). For this reason God is simple; He is devoid of any composition (*Enn.* V, 5, 4 [Volkmann, II, 210]; *Enn.* II, 9, 1 [Volkmann, I, 184]).

<sup>43</sup> *Confess.*, VI, 4, 5 (PL 32, 722; ed. Skutella, 103).

<sup>44</sup> *Confess.*, VI, 3, 4 (PL 32, 721; ed. Skutella, 102); tr. *The Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, I, 76.



Therefore, if God is not corporeal substance, as Augustine had heretofore imagined Him, He automatically falls under a different and higher category of substances. Consequently, too, He does not fall under the laws of cosmology governing corporeal substances, to which laws Augustine had consistently subjected the being of God. The divine substance does not occupy space as material substances do. It is not composed of larger and smaller members displacing correspondingly larger and smaller parts of spaces, and thus taking up place part by part as man does according to his various physical members. In other words, as a pure spirit, God is neither visible as material bodies are,<sup>45</sup> nor is He divisible, as quantitative substances are.<sup>46</sup> Yet He is ever present and most intensely present; more than that, as the supreme Spirit He is present in a manner which is proper only to Himself.

As is noticeable, the *Confessions* afford not only a history of his heart and soul, but also the workings of his mind in regard to doctrinal matters. These, of course, were bound up most intimately with the vicissitudes of his religion. While we have here the expression of doctrine and practice combined, with the emphasis on the latter, in other works we find further substantiation and elucidation of the doctrines expressed or involved in the history of his soul. It is evident from the passages quoted that his persuasion and intimate feeling of God's presence are one of the outstanding experiences recorded in his *Confessions*. Here, therefore, we encounter the historical and practical considerations of the doctrine on the presence of God.

In other works of St. Augustine more emphasis is placed upon the investigation of the theoretical doctrine itself. Serious endeavor

<sup>45</sup> *De Serm. Dom. in monte*, I, 2, 8 (PL 34, 1232): "Quam ergo stulti sunt, qui Deum istis exterioribus oculis quaerunt. . . ."

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*; *Ep.* 120, 3, 14 (PL 33, 459; CSEL 34, II, 716-17, *Ep.* 148, I, 1 (PL 33, 622; CSEL 44, III, 332): "Sicut praesens rogavi, et nunc commoneo ut fratrem nostrum de quo collocuti sumus, videre et rogare digneris, ut ignoscat mihi si quid durius et asperius in se dictum accepit in ea epistola, quam me illo modo scripsisse non poenitet, quia dixi istius corporis oculos nec videre Deum, nec esse visuros. Causam quippe adjunxi cur hoc dixerim, ne scilicet Deus ipse corporeus esse credatur, et in loci spatio intervalloque visibilis; nihil enim videre aliter istius corporis oculus potest; et ne illud quod dictum est, Facie ad faciem (1 Cor. XIII, 12), sic accipiat, tanquam membrum corporis terminatus sit Deus. Ideo me ergo illud dixisse non poenitet, ne de ipso Deo tam impie sentiamus, ut eum non ubique totum, sed per localia spatia divisibilem existimemus: talia quippe his oculis novimus."

ors are made by the Saint to examine and clarify the manner in which God is present notwithstanding the abstruseness of the subject, the limitations of the human mind, and the inadequateness of language. An opposite example of such a concentrated effort to plumb the depths and to grasp comprehensively the doctrine of the divine presence is his *opusculum* to Dardanus *On the Presence of God*. This treatise had already been quoted and will be used copiously hereafter.

A few words on this treatise written in the form of an Epistle are in place. Dardanus, Prefect of the Gauls and Patrice,<sup>47</sup> had sent, around the year 417,<sup>48</sup> two questions to St. Augustine. Puzzled by the words of our Lord to the thief, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise,"<sup>49</sup> he asked whether these words indicate that paradise is situated in a certain part of the heavens, or that the good thief would be with Christ in paradise in the sense that he would be with Christ's humanity joined to the divinity everywhere diffused. Dardanus thought that the humanity of Christ might be everywhere diffused, just as the divinity, and hence, of necessity would be in paradise too.<sup>50</sup>

About a year elapsed before St. Augustine replied. When he did so, he treated the notion of the divine presence with such care, exactitude, and, one may say relative fullness, that later, when he wrote his *Libri Retractationum*, he referred to this *Epistle* to Dardanus, not as a letter but as a book concerning the presence of God.<sup>51</sup> In this review of the work St. Augustine himself feels that he has treated the presence of the divine nature in the universe and in man with painstaking diligence and subtlety.<sup>52</sup> It was this work which St. Leo quoted against the Eutychians,<sup>53</sup> and which was

<sup>47</sup> Cf. R. Ceillier, *Histoire Générale des Auteurs Sacres et Ecclésiastiques* (Paris: 1744), XI, 287.

<sup>48</sup> L. Tillemont, *Memoires pour servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique des six premières Siècles* (Paris: 1702), XIII, 716.

<sup>49</sup> Luke 23:43.

<sup>50</sup> *Ep.* 187, ad Dardanus, II, 3 (PL 33, 833; CSEL 57, 83).

<sup>51</sup> *Retract.*, II, 49 (PL 32, 650; CSEL 36, 186): "De praesentia Dei scripsi librum, ubi nostra intentio contra haeresim Pelagianam maxime vigilat non expresse nominatam."

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*; "de presentia naturae, quem Deum et summum et venum dicimus, et de templo ejus operose ac subtiliter disputatur."

<sup>53</sup> St. Leo, *Ep.* 165 (PL 54, 1180-1).

referred to by St. Fulgentius as the "Book of the Presence of God." <sup>54</sup>

The discussion about the good thief constitutes merely the introduction to the main subject which deals with the various aspects of the divine presence. St. Augustine tells Dardanus that paradise could be understood as the bosom of Abraham, and there the good thief would have been with the soul of Christ.<sup>55</sup> A solution of his difficulty, which is pointed out by Augustine, is this: in Christ there is a twofold nature, divine and human, and as God, therefore, Christ is everywhere. Wherever paradise may be, the thief will be with Christ, because God is everywhere.<sup>56</sup> "As for his soul, He (Christ) was to be in Limbo on that day, but according to divine immutability He had never left paradise, for He is always everywhere." <sup>57</sup>

Before Augustine leaves the treatment of Christ's presence as man, he corrects Dardanus' impression that, because Christ's humanity is joined to the divinity His human nature, too, is everywhere present. "Care must be taken," the Bishop of Hippo warns, "lest divinity be so linked to the humanity as to destroy the truth of the body. According to this (human) form, He must not be thought to be diffused everywhere. . . One person is God and Man . . . Jesus Christ, everywhere in that He is God, in heaven in that He is man." <sup>58</sup>

So much by way of introduction to *Letter 187* or treatise *On the Presence of God* to Dardanus. Since this *opusculum* contains the essential outlines of all that has been said and will be treated in this work, it is not necessary to subject it to any further analysis. It will afford one of the mainstays in interpreting the mind of St. Augustine. From it the principal topic will be drawn around which the subject of the divine omnipresence will be organized. Its importance will be evident from the many citations made from it. Because the work was written at a mature period of the Saint's life, and because it is an *ex professo* treatment of the subject, it commands an authority of the first rank on the topic. However its

<sup>54</sup> St. Fulgentius, *Ep.* 14, 34 (PL 65, 411, 423).

<sup>55</sup> *Ep.* 187, II, 6 (PL 33, 834; CSEL 57, 85).

<sup>56</sup> *Loc. cit.*, III, 7 (PL 33, 834; CSEL 57, 87).

<sup>57</sup> *Loc. cit.*, III, 9 (PL 33, 835; CSEL 57, 88).

<sup>58</sup> *Loc. cit.*, III, 10 (PL 33, 835; CSEL 57, 89).

doctrines must be confirmed, supplemented, and supported by what Augustine has written in his many other treatises.

The Bishop of Hippo made use of the experiences of his own soul in his frequent instructions to the people. The manner of the formation of the concept of God and the mode of the divine presence recur in these instructions. So far as the negative aspect of this conception is concerned he reproduces, in a sermon on Jacob and Esau, many of his own previous erroneous conceptions of God, denying that the Christian God is any of these. He is neither earth nor heaven. He cannot be anything that is finite, whether it be corporeal or spiritual. Augustine tells the people that God cannot be thought of in the form of man, no matter how perfect He be, nor in the form of matter, despite how precious it be. God cannot be any of the great bodies above us: the sun, the moon, or any planet. Even if one of these, for instance the sun, is selected and imagined as extended beyond all limits, it will not and cannot be God.

He who made heaven and earth is neither heaven nor earth; nor can anything terrestrial or celestial be thought, nor anything corporeal or spiritual: these are not God. Do not imagine for thyself some grandiose and beautiful human: God is not circumscribed by a human form; He is not contained by place, He is not held by space. Do not make for thyself a golden God: this is not God. For God Himself made the gold from which you wish to make God . . . Do not think that God is some such thing as you see in the heavens, either the moon, the sun, the stars, or whatever is refulgent and shines in heaven: these are not God. But again let it not appear to you that God is not a sun on this account that the sun is as a disk, and not an immense space of light; and you may say to yourself, therefore, that God is of immense and infinite light: so that you extend, as it were, the sun, and make it have no end, neither on the one side or the other, nor from above or from below; and yet you imagine God to be an immense light: nor is this God. God dwells in an inaccessible light (I Tim. 6:16): but such a light is not a disk, nor can it be known to the carnal eyes.<sup>59</sup>

But even in his doctrinal works there are frequent reminders of his former difficulties in forming the right notion of God. The

<sup>59</sup> *Sermo* 4, 4, 5 (PL 38, 35).



frequency of such passages are indicative of the extent to which his previous doubts, perplexities and speculations with regard to the nature of God have left an indelible impression on his soul. They are likewise a reiterated evidence of his efforts and solicitude in correcting the misconceptions of men and in inculcating a concept so fundamental and necessary for true religion. In his work *On Christian Doctrine* intended "to help to an understanding of the Scriptures"<sup>60</sup> and designed to show "how to present the facts which we had comprehended,"<sup>61</sup> Augustine portrays the various manners in which different types of men present God as the most excellent and sublime Being. He makes a fundamental division of men into those who are sensual, as being led by their senses, and into those who are spiritual, as being guided by their intellects. In his description of their concepts we easily detect the various stages of his own life.

When the one God of gods (Ps. 49:1) is thought of, even by those who believe in, invoke, and worship other gods 'whether in heaven or on earth' (I Cor. 8:5), He is considered in such a way that the very thought tries to conceive a nature which is more excellent and more sublime than all others. Men are indeed influenced by diverse goods, some by those which are concerned with the senses of the body, others by those which affect the intellectual quality of the mind. Consequently those who have surrendered to the bodily senses think that the sky, or what they see so radiant in the sky, or the world itself is the God of gods. Or, if they attempt to go beyond the world, they visualize something luminous and conceive it as infinite or of that shape which seems most pleasing in their vague imagining. Or they think of it in the form of the human body, if they prefer that to other things. However, if they do not think there is one God of gods, but rather many and innumerable gods of equal rank, they still attribute to each one the form of body that seems most excellent in their own minds. Those who by means of their intellect strive to visualize what God is, place Him above not only all visible and corporeal natures, but even all intellectual and spiritual natures, above all changeable things. All men

<sup>60</sup> *Retract.* II, 4 (PL 32, 631; CSEL 36, 136).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*; these words refer to the IV Book of the *De Doctrina Christiana*, which book was added much later when at about A.D. 427 he interrupted his *Retractationes* in order to finish it. For the Fourth Book, cf. Sr. M. Therese Sullivan, *De doctrina Christiana liber quartus* (Washington, D.C.: 1930).

engage in contest over the excellence of God, and no one can be found to believe a being is God if there is any being more excellent. Hence all men agree that He is God whom they esteem above all other things.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> *De doct. Chris.*, I, 7, 7 (PL 34, 21); tr. by J. J. Gavigan, in *The Fathers of the Church* (New York: 1947), p. 32.

## CHAPTER IV

### MODES OF PRESENCE

**S**T. AUGUSTINE was able to penetrate to the very metaphysics of being. His mind clearly perceives the three great categories of being, viz., material beings, spiritual beings, and the unchangeable, supreme Spirit. It likewise distinguishes between modes of presence which correspond to the three categories of being. He has evolved and established the doctrines involved philosophically and theologically. Starting from the lowest type of beings, we shall consider, according to the mind of St. Augustine, their nature and then their mode of presence. It is necessary to make a study of both the natures and modes or presence of these various categories of beings because they are so correlated that the mode of presence is determined by the nature of the being.

#### BODIES

In order to have a better conception of God's presence in the universe, it is necessary to consider the various manners in which diverse categories of substances take up their location or presence in that universe. For the present, attention may be fixed upon the two types of presence which are proper to the two general types of substances, namely, corporeal and spiritual. It must be recalled that the Fathers, in forming their notion of God, ascend to God from the created universe which surrounds them, and their knowledge of the perfections of God is drawn from the perfections they perceived in the universe. However, they purify and exalt these created and limited perfections to the highest possible degree before they associate them with the all-perfect God.

They perceive that what we call presence is an attribute which varies in its perfections as found in created beings. Thus they

predicate presence of the material universe and of the material bodies contained in it. Still they realize and teach that there is a more perfect form of presence than that proper to material substances, and this is the type of presence which is proper to created spiritual substances within the framework of creation. This process of arriving at knowledge of higher and supersensible beings is not only known to the Fathers and expressly advanced by St. Augustine, but is also common to all mankind. The human mind ascends from lower and more tangible beings to higher and less accessible beings: it rises from a knowledge of material beings to immaterial beings. By the same process it passes from a knowledge of the presence of material beings to that of immaterial beings.<sup>1</sup> Spiritual beings and their mode of presence cannot be attained directly by the senses; we can speak of them by comparison with material beings.

St. Augustine has contributed more to the development of the philosophical explanation of how corporeal beings take up their presence in the universe than any other writer in Greek antiquity or the patristic age. To be sure, it is a basic doctrine that obtrudes itself not only upon the trained mind of the philosopher but also upon the thoughts of the common man. It is founded on the *sensus communis*, but it also occurs as a technical doctrine in the thought of the greatest philosophers. No one has been so painstaking in investigating, applying, and stating the matter with precision and care as St. Augustine. The establishment of the philosophical tenet pertaining to the mode of presence of corporeal substances was but a stepping-stone to a loftier and more important truth, viz., the manner in which God is present in the universe. Here again, the revealed truth that God is present everywhere is the incentive and guiding light to a further and more accurate study of what the senses and unaided reason are able to attain by themselves.

As to corporeal bodies, they are wholly located or present in the whole place or space which they occupy; but each part of the same body is also in the corresponding part of place or space which that part occupies. Therefore, corporeal entities, whether they be of a grosser or bulkier type, such as earth and liquid, or whether

<sup>1</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 11 (PL 34, 462; CSEL 28, 392): "ut ab inferioribus ratio ad superiora conscendat."



they be of a subtler or more pneumatic type, such as air and light, cannot be altogether everywhere at the same time. These substances are limited by their concrete and specific location. Even in that one and same location the parts of the material substance are measured by the corresponding parts of the place that is occupied. St. Augustine does not explicitly employ the phraseology "circumscriptive presence" which the Greek Fathers were wont to use for the presence of material substances. He employs the term "circumscriptive" in a cognate sense when he says that quantity is circumscribed or that God cannot be circumscribed by figure.<sup>2</sup> Augustine's manner of delineating presences of material substances by extension in space as a receptacle of them and of measuring parts of the body by the corresponding parts of space is equivalent to the Fathers' concept of circumscriptive presence.

This law of the mode of presence proper to material bodies recurs again and again in the philosophy of St. Augustine, and his insistence on it can easily be explained in the light of his previous misconceptions of God. Thus the material substance is not present altogether in every part of the place it occupies.<sup>3</sup> Such is the nature of quantitative substances, which are by their very nature subject to divisibility, measurement, and dependence upon extension and locality for their very existence. They occupy a place through their quantity, which is necessarily circumscribed by space.<sup>4</sup> To use St. Augustine's descriptive summation: "To be diffused through spaces, to be encompassed by places, to have parts, halves, thirds, quarters and wholes, is proper to corporeal bodies."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Sermo* 23, 5, 5 (PL 38, 157): "Ergo si hoc putaverit homo carnalis, quia Dei natura atque substantia distincta membris est, determinata forma, circumscripta quantitate manens loco, quid cum illo facio? . . . Si . . . talem crediderit Deum, . . . circumscriptum figura. . . ."

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.* 137, 2, 4 (PL 33, 517; CSEL 44, III, 101): "Hominum iste sensus est, nihil nisi corpora valentium cogitare; sive ista crassiora, sicut sunt humor atque humus, sive subtiliora, sicut aeris et lucis; sed tamen corpora, quorum nullum potest esse ubique totum, quoniam per innumerabiles partes aliud alibi habeat necesse est, et quantumcumque sit corpus seu quantulumcunque corpusculum, loci occupet spatium, eundemque locum sic impleat, ut in nulla ejus parte sit totum. Ac per hoc densari ac rarescere, contrahi et dilatari, in minutias deteri et grandescere in molem, non nisi corporum est."

<sup>4</sup> *Sermo* 23, 5, 5 (PL 38, 157).

<sup>5</sup> *Sermo* 277, 13, 13 (PL 38, 1264).

It is against this manner of conceiving the divine presence that the mature, converted St. Augustine argues in the *Epistle on the Presence of God* and other writings. God cannot be present in this manner, for He would have to be subject to measurement and divisibility. Half of Him would have to be in one half of the universe and the other half of Him in the other half of the universe; and so on, each part of His being would have to be contained in, and measured by, parts of space and place. Now, every part of God so present and so extended in its own section of space or occupying its own part of place would be less than the whole of His divine substance.<sup>6</sup> The basic reason, of course, for denying such a type of presence to God is that He is not a corporeal entity.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, such a mode of presence, besides divisibility and composition, would involve dependence in existence upon created space or place.

It is evident that St. Augustine considers space as something real which serves as a receptacle for all created things, whether they be material or spiritual. Space is so necessary that a thing cannot be without existing in it; nor can it be imagined without space as its substratum. All created bodies, therefore, require space for their existence. God alone, the uncreated cause and immutable Spirit, is independent of space.

What conception of matter did St. Augustine entertain? His conception was not that of Plato or of Aristotle, for whom matter possesses a metaphysical character; matter and form enter into the constitution of every being. Thus for Aristotle matter is the determinable element whereas form is the determining factor. Augustinian matter was taken directly from Plotinus, who in turn borrowed his notion of matter from the Stoics.<sup>8</sup> Their matter coincided with a physical being possessing three dimensions.<sup>9</sup> Thus, an Augustinian *corpus*, body, in the strict sense (for, as will be seen, he also admits a wider sense of this term) is tridimensional.

<sup>6</sup> *Ep.* 187, 5, 17 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 95); *ibid.*, 4, 11 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 90; *ibid.*, 4, 17 (PL p. 838; CSEL p. 961).

<sup>7</sup> *Sermo* 277, 13, 13 (PL 38, 1264).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. C. Baeumker, *Das Problem der Materie in der griechischen Philosophie. Eine hist.-kritische Untersuchung* (Münster: 1890), p. 332.

<sup>9</sup> Plutarchus, *De Com. Not.* c. 40; *Opera* II, 1322; cf. C. Baeumker, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

The three dimensions are characteristic of material beings, so that if a body has one dimension, it must necessarily possess two other dimensions.<sup>10</sup> It is through the distances caused by these three dimensions that material beings occupy space, and are said to be in place.<sup>11</sup> "It is not a body," says St. Augustine, "unless it rests in, or is moved through, the dimensions of place by its length, width, and depth in such a manner that a larger part of it occupies a larger part of place, a smaller part a smaller place, and is less in a part than in a whole."<sup>12</sup>

### SOUL

Wherever the three dimensions are wanting, there is not a material being, but an immaterial one. There are things which we cannot call nothing, and yet which cannot be described as long, wide, or high; to wit: truth, wisdom, justice, mercy, goodness.<sup>13</sup> We must also classify the soul among such entities, since she possesses no spatial dimensions. "The soul," says St. Augustine, "must not be believed to be long, wide, or heavy."<sup>14</sup>

Such substances as the human soul are not present by quantitative extension in space, nor do they occupy place by location of parts in corresponding parts of place. They are so present in the human body as to be whole in that one whole body and at the same time whole in each part of that body: *in toto [corpore] tota est, et in qualibet parte tota est*.<sup>15</sup> This is the emphatic and trenchant rule laid down by St. Augustine on the mode of presence of the human soul. To the concept that a spiritual substance does not measure part for part with its container and is not quantitatively restricted by the dimensions of its container, St. Augustine has

<sup>10</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 6, 10 (PL 32, 1041).

<sup>11</sup> *De anim. et ejus orig.*, IV, 21, 35 (PL 44, 544): "corpora . . . quae per distantiam longitudinis, latitudinis, altitudinis, locorum occupant spatia, minora minoribus suis partibus, et majora majoribus . . ."

<sup>12</sup> *Ep.* 166, i.e., *De orig. anim. hum.*, II, 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL 44, 551): "corpus non est, nisi quod per loci spatium aliqua longitudine, latitudine, altitudine ita sistitur vel movetur, ut majore sui parte majorem locum occupet, et breviori brevior, minusque sit in parte quam in toto."

<sup>13</sup> *Ep.*, 120, 2, 10 (PL 33, 457; CSEL 34, 712); *Ep.*, 147, 17, 43 (PL 33, 616; CSEL 44, 317).

<sup>14</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 3 (PL 32, 1038).

<sup>15</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 6, 8 (PL 42, 929).

added, or rather has firmly established, the notion that such a substance is also whole in every part.

Some years before the *Letter on the Presence of God* was written to Dardanus, Augustine in a letter to St. Jerome had taken up the question of the way in which corporeal and incorporeal substances are present. In itself a treatise bearing the title *De origine animae hominis*, this latter letter deals with the various opinions concerning the origin of the human soul relative to the question of how original sin is transmitted from parents to their progeny.<sup>16</sup> As for himself, Augustine remained dubious and hesitant to the very end of his life as to the origin of the soul.<sup>17</sup> Consequently the authority of St. Augustine cannot be invoked either in favor of creationism or against it.<sup>18</sup> Because of the tremendous influence of St. Augustine upon posterity there was no consensus among the Fathers and writers concerning the origin of the soul up to the time of Peter Lombard.<sup>19</sup> The uncertainty and hesitation which was expressed by the Bishop of Hippo characterizes this whole period.

St. Augustine teaches that all spiritual substances are created by God. He expressly ascribed the origin of the human soul to God who creates it out of nothing.<sup>20</sup> The question here is whether the soul originated from God directly through creation at the beginning of time in the seven biblical days of creation, or through creation at the moment of generation, or whether it was directly

<sup>16</sup> For the various teachings on the origin of the soul, cf. R. Lacroix, "L'origine de l'âme humaine," *Rev. d'Université d'Ottawa*, XIV (1944), 61\*-97\*; 196\*-202\*; 209\*-49\*; for St. Augustine's doctrine, see pp. 89\* ff. Cf. also J. de Paris, "La nature de l'âme et de l'âme humaine d'après saint Augustin," *Estudis Franciscans*, XLII (1930), 312 f.

<sup>17</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, X, 21 (PL 34, 425; CSEL 28, 325): "Jam de caeterarum (id est, praeter animam Christi) animarum adventu, utrum ex parentibus an desuper sit, vincant qui potuerint: ego adhuc inter utrosque ambigo, et moveor, aliquando sic, aliquando autem sic, salvo eo dumtaxat, ut vel corpus esse animam, vel aliquam corpoream qualitatem sive coaptationem, si ita dicenda est, quam Graeci *ἀρμονίαν* vocant, non credam, nec quolibet ista garriente me crediturum esse confidam, adjuvante Deo mentem meam." *Contra Julian.*, V, 4, 17 (PL 44, 794): "Quid autem horum sit verum, libentius disco quam dico, ne audeam docere quod nescio."

<sup>18</sup> Cf. J. Pohle—M. Gierens, *Lehrbuch der Dogmatik* (9 ed.; Paderborn: 1936), I, 426.

<sup>19</sup> For example, Fulgentius, *De ver. praed. et grat.*, III, 18 (PL 65, 666): Gregorius, M., *Ep. 52 ad Secund.* (PL 77, 989).

<sup>20</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VII, 28, 43 (PL 34, 372; CSEL 28, 228).



transmitted to the body by the generating parents. In the case of the parental transmission, a certain immaterial particle emanates from their soul, enters the seed, and grows into the soul of the child. Examples used to illustrate this theory are the origin of the light from light, or fire from fire. This theory is known as spiritual traducianism in opposition to generationism which teaches that God is the Creator of each soul at the time it is united with the body. It was not until the thirteenth century that all wavering vanished. Venerable Moneta of Cremona (1235) strenuously defended creationism as a catholic doctrine.<sup>21</sup> St. Thomas showed that it was unphilosophical to accept a division and separation of one spiritual substance from another.<sup>22</sup> In fact he calls it a heresy.<sup>23</sup>

There are two reasons why St. Augustine did not arrive at a definite and right solution concerning the origin of the soul.<sup>24</sup> First, the philosophical concept of a spiritual substance was not sufficiently developed, as will be pointed out. Second, a theological doctrine was involved, namely the transmission of original sin by generation. St. Augustine was willing to accept the doctrine of the immediate creation of the soul by God if it were compatible with the existence of original sin.<sup>25</sup> There appeared to be better prospects of accounting for the transmission of original sin by the acceptance of traducianism. Before broaching the real problem of the transmission of original sin, Augustine found it expedient to probe into the nature of the soul and to express his opinion on it.

<sup>21</sup> *Summa contra Cathar.*, II, 4.

<sup>22</sup> *C. Gen.*, II, 86: "Ridiculum est dicere aliquam intellectualem substantiam vel per divisionem corporis dividi, vel etiam ab aliqua virtute corporea produci. Sed anima humana est quaedam intellectualis substantia, . . . Non igitur potest dici, quod dividatur per divisionem seminis, neque quod producat in esse a virtute activa, quae est in semine; et sic nullo modo per seminis traductionem anima humana incipit esse."

<sup>23</sup> *Summa theol.*, I, q. 118, a. 2.

<sup>24</sup> In their annotations to the first *schema* of the *constitutiones de doctrina catholica*, the theologians of the Vatican Council give reasons why St. Augustine is to be excused in this matter. Cf. *Col. Lac.*, VII, 546.

<sup>25</sup> *Ep.* 166, 8, 25 (PL 33, 731; CSEL 44, 580): "Unde illa de novarum animarum creatione sententia, si hanc fidem fundatissimam [peccati originalis] non oppugnat, sit et mea; si oppugnat, non sit et tua."

## NATURE OF SOUL

Among other qualities ascribed to the soul, it is emphatically and constantly described by the term "incorporeal,"<sup>26</sup> as opposed to what is corporeal or a "body."<sup>27</sup> In connection with this last term, Augustine states that he does not wish to enter into any dispute about the term *corpus* itself. It must be remembered that in the Latin of the times, at least in the African part of the Church, the term *corpus* meant a reality that might be either corporeal or spiritual. It is in this sense that Tertullian calls God a *corpus*,<sup>28</sup> since whatever is not a *corpus* must be nothing.<sup>29</sup> St. Augustine, too, refers to this meaning of the term,<sup>30</sup> and remarks that in this sense of the word the soul can be said to be a *corpus*.<sup>31</sup> But in the proper sense, or at least in the sense which had already gained ascendancy in the time of St. Augustine, a body (*corpus*) is described by him as being or moving in a place according to its three dimensions, and as being distributed in place according to the measurement of its parts. Hence, a larger part of that body occupies a

<sup>26</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VII, 28, 43 (PL 34, 372; CSEL 28, 228): "Nunc tamen de anima, quam Deus inspiravit homini sufflando in ejus faciem, nihil confirmo, nisi . . . sit incorporea, id est, non sit corpus, sed spiritus . . . non ita factus ut in ejus naturam natura ulla corporis vel irrationalis animae verteretur; ac per hoc, de nihilo."

<sup>27</sup> *De orig. anim.*, II, 4 (PL 33, 721; CSEL 44, III, 550-51): "Incorpoream esse animam. . . . Porro si corpus non est, nisi quod per loci spatium aliqua longitudine, latitudine, altitudine ita sistitur vel movetur, ut majore sui parte majorem locum occupet, et breviori brevior, minusque sit in parte quam in toto, non est corpus anima." Cf. also *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 33 (PL 34, 481): "Animam vero non esse corpoream, non me putare, sed plane scire, audeo profiteri."

<sup>28</sup> On this account some investigators see in Tertullian an exponent of the teaching that God is corporeal. Cf. R. E. Roberts, *The Theology of Tertullian* (London: 1924), p. 127.

<sup>29</sup> Thus in the work *Adv. Praxeas.*, 7 (PL 2, 161; CSEL 47, ed. A. Kroymann, III, 235) he says God is a *corpus*, "although God is a spirit," but in another work, *De carne Christi*, 11 (PL 2, 774; ed. F. Oehler [Lipsiae,] 1851-54, II, 446) he practically gives us a definition of a *corpus*: "Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis: nihil est incorporale, nisi quod non est." Tertullian did however teach that the human soul, although it was immortal had a corporeal nature. Cf. Aug., *De Haeresibus* LXXXVI (PL 42, 46).

<sup>30</sup> *De orig. anim.*, II, 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL 44 ed. A. Goldbacher, III, 550): "si corpus est omnis substantia, vel essentia, vel si quid aptius nuncupatur id quod aliquo modo est in seipso."

<sup>31</sup> *De orig. anim.*, II 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL p. 550-51): "corpus est anima."

larger space or part of the occupied place; a lesser part of the same body occupies a lesser space; and any part of it takes up less of the space or place than the whole. Thus, in no part of space and in no part of the place that a material body occupies is the whole body contained.

The notion of spirit, or of the spiritual, is developed by contrasting it with matter, or the corporeal.<sup>32</sup> The terms that Augustine uses to express this idea of the immaterial are *anima*, *animus*, *immaterialis*, *spiritualis*.<sup>33</sup> Of these the most prominent in his writings is *spiritus*. It is also evident from an analysis of these words that immateriality must be taken in a wider sense than scholastic philosophers at present use.

In its widest meaning the word "spirit" is used by St. Augustine to denote a reality that is not a body.<sup>34</sup> Since such a being possesses life, the term spirit is equivalent to the principle of life, as is also the term "soul"—*animus*.<sup>35</sup> Literally, it means "breath" and refers to all forms of life.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, the term *spiritus* is used by St. Augustine in the domain and process of cognition. It is "the spiritual nature of man, where images of sensible things are formed."<sup>37</sup> Wherefore, "spiritual knowledge" (*cognitio spiritualis*) stands in opposition to the intellect (*mens, ratio, intelligentia*). The former is considered inferior to the latter. The soul of man is a spirit (*spiritus*) and an

<sup>32</sup> For Augustine's teaching on the immateriality and spirituality of the soul, cf. J. F. Nourisson, *La philosophie de Saint Augustin* (2 éd., Paris: 1866), pp. 165-98; Dupont, *La philosophie de St. Augustin* (Louvain: 1881), pp. 114-29; J. Storz, *Die philosophie des hl. Augustinus* (Freiburg: 1882), pp. 104-16; Heinzelmann, *Augustins Lehre von der Unsterblichkeit und Immaterialität der menschlichen Seele* (Jena: 1874); W. Thimme, *Augustins geistiger Entwicklungsgang in den ersten Jahren nach seiner "Bekehrung"* (Berlin: 1908), pp. 139-52; W. P. O'Connor, *The Concept of the Human Soul according to St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1921), pp. 48-56; M. Grabmann, *Grundgedanken des heiligen Augustinus über Seele und Gott* (Köln: 1929), pp. 38-52.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. J. Pastuszka, *Niematerjalność Duszy Ludzkiej u św. Augustyna* (Lublin: 1930), p. 56.

<sup>34</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 7, 16 (PL 34, 459; CSEL 28, 388): "Quidquid enim corpus non est, et tamen aliquid est, jam recte spiritus dicitur."

<sup>35</sup> *De anim. et ejus orig.*, IV, 23, 37 (PL 44, 546): "Generale nomen animae esse intelligimus spiritum."

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. also *De Trinit.*, XIV, 16, 22 (PL 42, 1053).

<sup>37</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 9 (PL 34, 461; CSEL 28, 391); *Ep.* 162, 4 (PL 33, 706; CSEL 44, 515).

intellect (*mens*), whereas the soul of the brute is only a *spiritus*.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, the term "spirit" is employed by the Saint to designate the intellectual soul, by which man is brought closer to God, and which distinguishes him from the world of matter and brutes.<sup>39</sup> Through this intellectual power man not only knows God—it is the eye, as Augustine says, for seeing God—but he is also the image of God who is Intellect and Will.<sup>40</sup>

From these various uses of the word "spirit" it is to be concluded that the immateriality of the soul has a twofold meaning in the writings of St. Augustine. It means either (1) that the soul has a mode of being that is superior to that which surrounds us in the material world; or (2) that the soul has a mode of being that is opposite to the mode of being of matter.<sup>41</sup> St. Augustine underscores the difference that exists between the soul and matter. Thus he asserts that the soul "does not consist of soil, or water, or fire, or air, either of them all together, or separately taken."<sup>42</sup> He excludes matter as a constituent part of the soul, and this holds for the soul of the brute as well as man. Furthermore, St. Augustine expresses the human soul's independence of matter. The activities of the soul bear none of the characteristics of matter, nor are they bound up with the material condition of a body. The soul's being and activity are more noble and perfect than that of bodies, or other entities that are not bodies but are essentially dependent on bodies in being and action.<sup>43</sup>

St. Augustine admits the existence of a "spiritual matter" which enters into the composition of the soul. In the beginning God created from nothing "prime matter," both material and spiritual.<sup>44</sup> Spiritual matter is called quasi-matter (*quasi materia*) since

<sup>38</sup> *De Trinit.*, XIV, 16 (PL 42, 1053).

<sup>39</sup> *De fide et symb.*, 10, 23 (PL 40, 193): "Pars enim quaedam ejusdem (animae) rationalis, qua carent bestiae, spiritus dicitur; principale nostrum spiritus est." *De anim. et ejus orig.*, IV, 22, 36 (PL 44, 545): "(spiritus) quo ratiocinamur, intelligimus, sapimus."

<sup>40</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 7, 18 (PL 34, 460; CSEL 28, 388): "Dicitur spiritus et ipsa mens rationalis, ubi est quidam tamquam oculus animae, ad quam pertinet imago et agnitio Dei."

<sup>41</sup> Pastuszka, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>42</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 1, 2 (PL 32, 1036).

<sup>43</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 28, 54 (PL 32, 1066).

<sup>44</sup> *De Gen. contra Man.*, 1, 5 (PL 34, 178): "prima ergo materia facta est



it does not possess the attributes of physical bodies and is higher and more perfect than corporeal matter.<sup>45</sup> Just as the body of man had been fashioned from a corporeal "prime matter", so also the human soul was formed from a spiritual "prime matter", which itself was not a soul. A proof for this composition of the soul is found by St. Augustine in the mutable condition of the soul, which perfects itself by truth and virtue, or is deformed by vice.<sup>46</sup> Otherwise, if the soul were a pure spirit and spiritual matter did not enter into its composition, it would not be subject to changes.<sup>47</sup>

It is evident that in accepting the "*materia spiritualis*" from Greek philosophy<sup>48</sup> and early Christian writers,<sup>49</sup> Augustine has borrowed something difficult to assimilate into his structure of Christian thought. It is difficult to determine more definitely what he meant by this spiritual matter. The texts relating to it are few. Augustine himself realizes the difficulties in stating exactly whether this matter is something living or not, whether it animates other substances or not, and whether it is capable of happiness or not. In a word, it remained a problem for him.<sup>50</sup> It seems that he did not perceive that such matter would be incompatible with the immateriality of the soul. It is certain, however, that he conceived the soul, notwithstanding its quasi-material constituent, in a man-

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confusa et informis, unde omnia fierent." Cf. also *Confes.* XII, 4 (PL 32, 827; ed. M. Skutella, 296).

<sup>45</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, I, 1 (PL 34, 247; CSEL 28, 4).

<sup>46</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VII, 6 (PL 34, 359; CSEL 28, 206): "Fortasse potuit et anima, antequam ea ipsa natura fieret, quae anima dicitur, cujus vel pulchritudo virtus, vel deformitas vitium est, habere aliquam materiam pro suo genere spiritualement, quae nondum esset anima."

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*: "Si enim quiddam incommutabile esset anima, nullo modo ejus quasi materiam quaerere deberemus: nunc autem mutabilitas ejus satis indicat eam interim vitiis atque falaciis deformem reddi, formari autem virtutibus veritatisque doctrina, sed in sua jam natura qua est anima; sicut etiam caro in sua natura qua jam caro est, et salute decoratur, et morbis vulneribusque foedatur."

<sup>48</sup> In order to distinguish between God and creatures Platonic philosophers maintained that God alone is simple and without composition, while creatures are constituted of matter and form. Cf. Überweg, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie des Altertums* (10 ed.; Berlin: 1909), I, 172-339. Hence the soul, too, is composed of matter and form. Spiritual matter is described in detail by Plotinus, *Enn.* II, 4, 3-5; cf. Baumecker, *Das Problem der Materie*, p. 411.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. "Ange," *Dict. de Theol. Cath.*, I, 1195 ff.

<sup>50</sup> *De Gen. ad lib.*, VII, 7 (PL 34, 359; CSEL 28, 206).

ner altogether different from the matter which enters into the constitution of material bodies.<sup>51</sup>

Whether we name the soul a body or an immaterial being, we must agree that it possesses a nature of its own, that it is superior to all material creatures, that it cannot be known by images of the imagination which are gained by the senses, but can only be grasped by the mind, and experienced by life.<sup>52</sup>

Long after St. Augustine, "spiritual matter" was accepted as a constituent of spiritual substances, and no difficulty was sensed in the problem of reconciling it with the immateriality of the soul.<sup>53</sup> St. Augustine's definition of a spirit, or of the spiritual, inasmuch as it is opposed to a material body, or to the corporeal,<sup>54</sup> is reiterated in the golden age of Scholasticism by St. Bonaventure who follows closely in the footsteps of the African Doctor. "This name spirit," writes the Seraphic Doctor, "is received in a spiritual or rational substance . . . from spirituality against corporeity."<sup>55</sup> St. Thomas is more exact in his definition of a spirit when he excludes from it all matter, whether corporeal or spiritual, so that spirituality is equivalent to absolute immateriality.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the Angelic Doctor admits that there need not be identity between materiality and corporeity. There may be composition in an angel or a human soul without making it thereby a corporeal substance.<sup>57</sup>

After separation from its present companion, the body, the soul remains spiritual in the sense that it has no other body whatsoever, or anything that could be considered a body. The reason that St. Augustine adduces is simply that the soul is spiritual and not corporeal.<sup>58</sup> Thus notwithstanding the *materia spiritualis* which is supposed to be its constituent, it is spiritual in contrast to the corporeal or material.

<sup>51</sup> *De Gen. ad lib.*, VII, 21 (PL 34, 366; CSEL 28, 217).

<sup>52</sup> *Ep.* 166, II, 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL 44, 551).

<sup>53</sup> Such was the teaching of Boethius, Hugo Victorinus, St. Bernard, Alexander of Hales, and also, at least partially, of St. Albert the Great. Cf. Endres, "Des Alexander von Hales Leben und psychologische Lehre," *Philos. Jahrb.*, (1888), 203.

<sup>54</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 145, 4 (PL 37, 1886): "res spiritualis est, res incorporea est."

<sup>55</sup> In *I Sent.*, d. 10, a. 2, q. 3, concl.: "hoc nomen spiritus . . . accipitur in substantia spirituali, sive rationali . . . a spiritualitate contra corporeitatem."

<sup>56</sup> *Summa contra Gentes*, II, 50; *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 50, a. 2.

<sup>57</sup> *De potentia*, q. 6, a. 6 ad 4.

<sup>58</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 32 (PL 34, 480): "Jam utrum habeat aliquod corpus,

Besides the soul, St. Augustine conceives of angels as spiritual substances with the attributes of intelligence, volition, and immortality. A composite of a spiritual soul and a material body, man stands between angels and brutes.<sup>59</sup> Augustine does not hesitate to ascribe to angels a limitless duration, at least as a possibility, even *a parte ante*. He places them outside of time (i.e., before the creation of the universe), without making them coeternal with God. For angels, too, are computed among created objects.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless they are subject to the *motus quibus tempora peraguntur*, so that for them there is a past, present, and future.<sup>61</sup>

The word "angel" is significative of their office,<sup>62</sup> but they are by their very nature spirits.<sup>63</sup> This being so, can angels have bodies? St. Augustine must have been perplexed by tradition, which both before and after his time often ascribes bodies to angels, and by Sacred Scripture, which describes angels as appearing to men in corporeal forms. He explicitly maintains that what we have in common with angels is neither body nor vegetative and sensitive life, but intellectual life.<sup>64</sup> There are nevertheless not a few passages in St. Augustine that speak of angels as having subtle and ethereal bodies.<sup>65</sup> Yet while he speaks of man as being composed of body and soul, he never describes angels as being composed of a spirit and a body. The union, therefore, of the body with the spirit in an angel must be interpreted as being accidental and external.<sup>66</sup>

cum de hoc corpore exierit, ostendat qui potest; ego autem non puto: spiritua-  
lem enim arbitror esse, non corporalem."

<sup>59</sup> *De civ. Dei* IX, 14, 3 (PL 41, 267; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 386): "Homo medium quiddam est, sed inter pecora et angelos; ut, quia pecus est animal irrationale atque mortale, angelus autem rationale et immortale, medius homo esset, inferior angelis, superior pecoribus, habens cum pecoribus mortalitatem, rationem cum angelis, animal rationale mortale."

<sup>60</sup> Cf. J. de Paris, "La nature de l'ange et de l'âme humaine d'après saint Augustin," *Estudis Franciscans*, LXII (1930), 315 f.

<sup>61</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 15, 2 (PL 41, 364; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 537): "Ac per hoc etiamsi immortalitas angelorum non transit in tempore, nec praeterita est quasi jam non sit, tamen eorum motus quibus tempora peraguntur, ex futuro in praeteritum transeunt; et ideo creatori, in cujus motu dicendum non est vel fuisse quod jam non sit, vel futurum esse quod nondum sit, coaeterni esse non possunt."

<sup>62</sup> *Sermo* 7, 3 (PL 38, 84).

<sup>63</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XV, 23, 1 (PL 41, 468; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 108).

<sup>64</sup> *Sermo* 44, 3, 4 (PL 38, 255).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), pp. 61-62.

<sup>66</sup> J. de Paris, *op. cit.*, p. 338: "Elle est en effet, non pas intrinsèque, *in ipsa*

St. Augustine teaches that angels are subject to place and locomotion,<sup>67</sup> but he does not venture to describe or define the mode of presence of an angel in place. Such is also the case in the writings of the Fathers anteceding St. Augustine: they make no attempt to describe the manner of an angelic presence. The comparisons that are made are between material bodies, the soul, and God. The reason why they did not equate angels with the soul in the matter of presence was the vagueness and hesitation with which many of them viewed the spiritual nature of an angel.

#### MODE OF SOUL'S PRESENCE

The material body's mode of presence is contrasted with that of the soul.<sup>68</sup> Since their natures are altogether different, their modes of presence will also be altogether different.<sup>69</sup> The soul has a nature of its own, by virtue of which it is superior to all substances possessing tridimensional extension. In a certain sense it is not a composite, but simple;<sup>70</sup> in any case it is more simple than a corporeal body.<sup>71</sup> The soul has no quantitative mass, no corporal form, nor any configuration. It is not divisible, nor does it occupy space as bodies do.<sup>72</sup> Hence, compared with bodily substances, the soul forms a class of its own.<sup>73</sup>

The soul is in the body, to use Saint Augustine's own expression, *ratione entis, in unitate substantiae ac personae*, et, per tant, substantielle, mais extrinsèque, dynamique, accidentelle, en un mot."

<sup>67</sup> *Sermo* 277, 9 (PL 38, 1262): "Cum ergo videamus tantam celeritatem coelestium corporum, quae nobis videntur cum attenduntur non moveri; cui celeritati comparare possumus corpus angelicum? Adfuerunt etiam, et quando voluerunt se conspiciendos tangendosque praebuerunt. Lavit angelis pedes Abraham (Gen. 18:4). Non solum lavit illa corpora, verum etiam contrectavit. Apparuerunt, ut voluerunt, quando voluerunt, quibus voluerunt. Nihil difficultatis, nihil omnino tarditatis sentiunt."

<sup>68</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VII, 21, 27 (PL 34, 365): "Quamobrem nec illud audientum est, quod quidam putaverunt quintum quoddam esse corpus unde sit anima . . . si enim qui hoc sentiunt, hoc dicunt corpus quod et nos, id est, naturam quamlibet longitudine, latitudine, altitudine, spatium loci occupantem, neque hoc est anima, neque inde facta est credenda."

<sup>69</sup> *Ep.* 137, 2, 4 (PL 33, 517; CSEL 44, III, 101).

<sup>70</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 1 (PL 32, 1036): "simplex quiddam."

<sup>71</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 6, 8 (PL 42, 929): "simplicior est corpore."

<sup>72</sup> *Ep.* 120, 2, 10 (PL 33, 457): "sine ullis formis et molibus corporalibus, sine ullis lineamentis figurisque membrorum, sine ullis localibus sive finitis sive spatiis infinitis." Cf. also *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 31 (PL 34, 479).

<sup>73</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 1 (PL 32, 1036): "propriae substantiae videtur esse."



not by some local diffusion (*locali diffusione*), but by a certain vitalizing power (*quadam vitali intentione*). A local presence would mean an equal intensity of the soul's presence throughout the body in which it abides. Such is not the case. The soul is present altogether in the whole body and also altogether in each part of that body, but the intensity of its presence is not the same in each part of the occupied body. Manifestly, its virtue or power is more operative and intense in some parts than it is in others.<sup>74</sup> It is evident from what has been said that St. Augustine conceives the presence of the soul in terms of activity; in other words, it is a dynamic presence. Heretofore it has been seen that corporeal beings have a presence whereby their quantity is circumscribed by space: theirs is a static presence. Contrasted with this manner of being present is the mode of the soul's presence which is through a vitalizing activity of the body to which it is confined; such a presence is dynamic.

It is characteristic of the writings of St. Augustine that he frequently is not content with stating or explaining something unless he furnish proofs that are generally acceptable. Here also the Bishop is intent upon proving the soul's presence as a whole in the whole body and whole in each part of that body in opposition to the presence of a material body, which is whole in the whole place but not whole in each part of the occupied place. In a passage of his work *On the Origin of the Soul* he argues thus: When the least part of the human body is touched, the ensuing sensation is felt by the whole soul and not only by some part of it, for the whole man is rendered conscious of what happened. Nor does the aroused feeling or sensation of pain traverse the whole of man or diffuse itself through the whole body and thus make the whole soul conscious of what took place.<sup>75</sup> The feeling or sensation of pain re-

<sup>74</sup> *De orig. anim.*, II, 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL 44, 551): "Per totum quippe corpus quod animat, non locali diffusione, sed quadam vitali intentione porrigitur: nam per omnes ejus particulas tota simul adest, nec minor in minoribus, et in majoribus major; sed alicubi intentius, alicubi remissius, et in omnibus tota, et in singulis tota est."

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* (CSEL p. 551-52): "Neque enim aliter, quod in corpore etiam non toto sentit, tamen tota sentit: nam cum exiguo puncto in carne viva aliquid tangitur, quamvis locus ille non solum totius corporis non sit, sed vix in corpore videatur, animam tamen totam non latet; neque id quod sentitur, per corporis cuncta discurrit, sed ibi tantum sentitur ubi fit."

mains localized in the affected part, and of that we are conscious.

Augustine continues the argument:

Whence, therefore, does it come to the whole (soul) unless because the whole soul is present there where it happens; nor does she (the soul) abandon the other parts in order to be present there? For by her presence they (the other parts) too live where nothing has happened, and if it did happen, and happened at both places at the same time, both would not at the same time escape the attention of the soul. Hence she could not be whole at the same time and in all the parts at the same time and in the single particles of the body if she were so diffused as we see bodies diffused through the extensions of space, occupying with the smallest parts smaller (spaces) and with larger ones larger (spaces).<sup>76</sup>

The soul is, therefore, whole in the affected part of the body and whole in the whole body.

The same argument to prove this manner of presence of the soul is advanced in his deepest work, *De Trinitate*. It is formulated succinctly and runs thus:

On this account it is [the soul] simpler than the body because it is not diffused by its quantity through space, but is in each body, and wholly in the whole (body), and is wholly in each part of the body; and therefore when something which the soul perceives occurs in any least particle of the body, (although it does not take place in the whole body), the whole (soul) feels it, because it is not concealed from the whole.<sup>77</sup>

In the *Epistle on the Presence of God*, addressed to Dardanus, in which Augustine makes every effort to treat of the divine omnipresence with precision and detail, he presupposes this mode of presence which is proper to the human soul. He alludes to it in passing and does not elaborate upon it or produce any argument for it.<sup>78</sup> The apparent reason is because it was addressed to one whose mind was untrained, as is evident from the difficulties he

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* (CSEL p. 552).

<sup>77</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 6, 8 (PL 42, 929): "Nam ideo simplicior est corpore, quia non mole diffunditur per spatium loci, sed in unoquoque corpore, et in toto tota est, et in qualibet parte tota est; et ideo cum fit aliquid in quavis exigua particula corporis quod sentiat anima, quamvis non fiat in toto corpore, illa tamen tota sentit, quia totam non latet."

<sup>78</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 15 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57, IV, 92).

raises, and consequently the Bishop avoids any treatment or explanation of the abstruse question concerning the nature of the soul. The passages already adduced are sufficient and decisive in establishing his mind on the nature and manner of the presence of the soul in the body.<sup>79</sup>

St. Augustine is not the primary source or originator of this doctrine on the soul's presence. He borrowed the concept, phraseology, and arguments for the mode of her presence in the body from Plotinus.<sup>80</sup> It was Augustine, however, who established this fundamental doctrine of rational psychology for the use of Christian posterity. The Scholastics who follow scrupulously in his footsteps in this matter appeal to him as a source for the substantiation or confirmation of their doctrine.<sup>81</sup>

Because the soul belongs to the category of immaterial substances, it does not constitute an object of knowledge attained by the senses, for it is an "invisible something."<sup>82</sup> Nor is it an object which can be represented by the imagination; only material substances are such. For the same reason, God is not attainable by the senses nor can He be represented by material images of the imagination. The soul is properly reached by the spiritual power of the intellect (*mente intelligi*) and by internal experience, that is, consciousness (*vitaque sentire*).<sup>83</sup> Material objects belong to the domain of the senses and of the imagination; the soul and God, to the domain of the intellect.

<sup>79</sup> There are also other passages with the same argument, e.g., *Contra ep. Man.* 16 (PL 42, 185).

<sup>80</sup> *Enneads*, IV, 9, 1 (ed. Volkman, II, 153); IV, 7, 7 (ed. Volkman, II, 128); cf. W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (3 ed.; London: 1941), I, 216.

<sup>81</sup> Alexander of Hales, *Summa Theologiae*, p. II, q. LXIV (Venetiis, 1575, p. 109); St. Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. II, a. 1, q. 3 (*Ad Claras Aquas* [Quaracchi], 1932, I, 170-73); St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 76, a. 8; *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 1, a. 3; *De anima*, art. 10; *Contra Gent.*, II, c. 72; in *Rerum Principium*, reputed to be the work of John Duns Scotus, q. 12, a. 3 (*Ad Claras Aquas* [Quaracchi], 1910, pp. 316-20); Aegidius Romanus, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 3.

<sup>82</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 145, 4 (PL 37, 1886): "invisibile quiddam."

<sup>83</sup> *De orig. anim.*, II, 4 (PL 33, 722; CSEL 44, III, 553): "[anima] quae veraciter non possit in aliqua phantasia corporalium imaginum, quas per carnis sensus percipimus, cogitari, sed mente intelligi, vitaque sentiri."

## God

Material and spiritual created beings have various determinations of their being, and they are defined according to those determinations. Their being is always such or such. But God has no such determinations of His Being, and consequently He cannot be defined: He is Being unqualified: He simply *is*. The Bishop states that God is *ipsum esse*.<sup>84</sup>

St. Augustine extols the excellence of the soul on account of its spirituality, for which reason it approaches in kind to the spiritual substance of God.<sup>85</sup> Although the soul is spiritual, as is God, it does not belong to the category of being in which God is—for He is in a category all by Himself—nor is the soul in any way a part of God.<sup>86</sup> The soul is mutable, and hence in some sense composed and corruptible; God is absolutely simple, immutable, and incorruptible. Moreover, not only corporeal but also immaterial substances, such as souls and angels, are subject to time and located in place.<sup>87</sup> God is not limited by place and time. The ultimate reason for these fundamental differences between the immaterial soul and God lies in the being of each: God is fullness of being, since He is *esse subsistens, ipsum esse*. The soul and the angelic spirit originate from God, and therefore have a participated being. Hence in its existence the soul is subordinate to God and dependent upon Him. In this teaching on the origin and nature of the soul, St. Augustine departs from the doctrine of Plotinus. According to Plotinus the soul emanates from God, and in some way, even in its separated state constitutes a part of God.

The stages of St. Augustine's ascent from the material to the

<sup>84</sup> *De mor. Ecc.*, I, 14, 24 (PL 32, 1321): "Deum . . . nihil aliud dicam, nisi idipsum esse." Cf. *De Trinit.*, V, 2, 3 (PL 42, 912); *De civ. Dei*, XI, 10, 3 (PL 41, 327). See, E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1943), p. 286; M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Paderborn: 1927), pp. 82-85.

<sup>85</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 145, 4 (PL 37, 1886): "Natura animae praestantior est quam natura corporis, excellit multum; res spiritualis est, res incorporea est, vicina est substantiae Dei. Invisible quiddam est. . . Et quis est tandem, fratres carissimi, qui sufficiat laudibus animae?"

<sup>86</sup> *De orig. anim.*, II, 3 (PL 33, 721; CSEL 44, III, 549): "Non est pars Dei anima. Si enim hoc esset, omni modo incommutabilis atque incorruptibilis esset."

<sup>87</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 265).



very highest immaterial being may now be seen.<sup>88</sup> "He goes from the world to the soul to God by an ascending movement which may be described as a movement from the material to the immaterial and then from the immaterial-and-changing to the immaterial-and-unchanging."<sup>89</sup> His characteristic method is to start empirically from the thing without and then to proceed within to the soul of man and finally to ascend from the soul of man to the supreme Spirit.<sup>90</sup>

God is not present in the universe as a spirit that pervades and animates the whole corporeal universe in the manner that a human soul vivifies the body. Just as there is today a philosophical and religious opinion that maintains that God is a divine universal principle animating the universe, so too, St. Augustine was cognizant of such a tenet among philosophers before him and in his own time.<sup>91</sup> Such was the natural theology of Varro, who taught that God was the soul of the universe and that the earth constituted, as it were, His body. The world could be called God in so far as it could be named after its noblest part.<sup>92</sup> Such, in general, was the world-soul of the Stoics, who held that the divine spirit pervaded the whole universe and was contained in it as an animating part of it, although they conceived this spirit as being of a quasi-material character. St. Augustine mentions these theories to indicate their absurdity, and to repudiate them on the ground that a universe containing God in the form of an animating soul would necessarily constitute a part of Him.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 6 (PL 41, 231; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 329-31).

<sup>89</sup> A. C. Pegis, "In Defense of St. Augustine," *The New Scholasticism*, XVIII (1944), 99.

<sup>90</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 145, 5 (PL 37, 1887): "Ab exterioribus ad interiora, ab inferioribus ad superiora." Cf. E. Gilson, "The Future of Augustinian Metaphysics," *A Monument to St. Augustine* (London: 1945), pp. 302, 306; E. Chapman, *St. Augustine's Philosophy of Beauty* (New York: 1939), p. 1.

<sup>91</sup> Already Thales the Milesian asserted that "all things are full of gods" (quoted by Aristotle, *De anima*, I, 5, 411a, 8), which statement, Aristotle infers, was suggested to Thales by the opinion that "soul is diffused throughout the whole universe" (*De anima*, I, 5, 411a, 7). Cicero identified the world-soul of Thales with God (*De natura deorum*, I, 25). Cf. J. Burnet, *Early Greek philosophy* (4th ed.; London: 1930), pp. 49-50; E. Gilson, *God and philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>92</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 5 (PL 41, 198-99; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 280).

<sup>93</sup> *De civ. Dei*, IV, 12 (PL 41, 123; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 162-63).

Barring a pantheistic conception of God as the soul of the world, St. Augustine remains hesitant as to the possibility of the existence of some world-soul which would not be God Himself but a creature of God.<sup>94</sup> A problem that lingered in the mind of Augustine was whether there existed a soul or quasi-soul in the corporeal mass of the universe. Such a soul would function in the manner of the spirits animating animals and humans, guiding and governing them to a purposeful end. A rational soul in the universe would account for the motion, harmony, and order in nature. These, no doubt, suggested to the early Greek philosophers the existence of a soul or of some immediate divine power. This question of a world-soul, asserts the Saint, is a recondite and important problem. However, it can neither be affirmed nor denied unless it is sufficiently investigated.<sup>95</sup> Even if such a world-soul were to exist, the highest endowments of the human soul would be dependent upon God and not upon the world-soul. Thus wisdom and happiness are imparted to the soul of man directly by God.<sup>96</sup>

It is true that some of the more prominent passages relative to a world-soul occur in earlier works. Nevertheless, the same passages are reviewed in his last work, the *Retractationes*, which is at the same time the most mature and authoritative, since it passes judgment upon, or makes corrections of, assertions made in his previous works. Augustine thus reconsiders the passages dealing with the problem of the world-soul in *De musica*<sup>97</sup> and *De immortalitate animae*.<sup>98</sup> In the latter work he teaches that the body (*corpus*) subsists through the soul and exists by virtue of it being animated

<sup>94</sup> *De immortalitate animae*, 15, 24 (PL 32, 1033); *De musica*, VI, 14, 44 (PL 32, 1186).

<sup>95</sup> *De cons. Evang.*, I, 23, 33 (PL 35, 1058; CSEL 43 ed. F. Weirich, 34-35): "Nos vero, esse quamdam summam Dei sapientiam, cujus participatione fit sapiens quaecumque anima fit vere sapiens, non tantum concedimus, verum etiam maxime praedicamus. Utrum autem universa ista corporalis moles, quae mundus appellatur, habeat quamdam animam, vel quasi animam suam, id est rationalem vitam, qua ita regatur sicut unumquodque animal, magna atque abdita quaestio est: nec affirmari debet ista opinio, nisi comperta quod vera sit; nec refelli, nisi comperta quod falsa sit."

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*: "Quid autem hoc ad hominem, etiamsi semper eum lateat; quando quidem nulla anima fit sapiens vel beata ex alia quacumque anima, sed ex illa sola summa atque incommutabili Dei sapientia?"

<sup>97</sup> VI, 14, 44 (PL 32, 1186).

<sup>98</sup> 15, 24 (PL 32, 1033).

by the soul. "This is true," Augustine says, "not only for each living being but also for the whole universe." In the *Retractationes* he judges this statement to be rash.<sup>99</sup> Reconsidering what he has previously written in *De musica* he states that life, which is from God, is the principle of permanence and unity in men and animals, and he identifies this life with the soul. Other created beings, namely inanimate things, also have permanence, unity, and thereby beauty,<sup>100</sup> and for these Augustine insinuates the possibility of the existence of a soul.<sup>101</sup> As an afterthought, he again insists that such a judgment is rash not because he can show it to be false, but because he has no reason to accept it as true.<sup>102</sup> The Bishop admits that he was not able to arrive at the conclusion that this universe is a living being animated by a soul either by the powers of reason or by the authority of the Scriptures.<sup>103</sup>

Whether there be a world-soul or not, and whatever may be its nature, St. Augustine is categorical in his assertion that the universe is not God.<sup>104</sup> If there is a soul in the universe, then it too is created as is the universe. While Augustine is willing to accept this doctrine from Greek philosophy because it seemed plausible

<sup>99</sup> *Retract.*, I, 5, 3 (PL 32, 591; CSEL 36 ed. P. Knöll, 27): "Hoc totum prorsus temere dictum est."

<sup>100</sup> Cf. E. Chapman, *St. Augustine's Philosophy of Beauty* (New York: 1939), pp. 38 ff. and 54 f.

<sup>101</sup> *Retract.*, I, 11, 4 (PL 32, 601; CSEL 36 ed. P. Knöll, 54): "Haec verba si eo modo accipi possunt, ut non intelligatur infima pulchritudo, nisi in corporibus hominum, omniumque animalium, quae cum sensu corporis vivunt, ratio manifesta defendit. Hoc quippe in ea pulchritudine imitatur constantiam, quod in compage sua manent eadem corpora, in quantum manent: id autem a summo Deo in ea per animam trajicitur. Anima quippe ipsam compagem tenet, ne dissolvatur, et diffuat; quod videmus in corporibus animalium anima discedente contingere. Si autem infima pulchritudo in omnibus corporibus intelligatur, cogit ista sententia etiam ipsum mundum animal credere, ut etiam in ipsum, quod in illo imitatur constantiam, a summo Deo per animam trajiciatur."

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 11, 4 (PL 32, 602; CSEL 36, 54): "Unde tale aliquid a me dictum quo id accipi possit, etiam in libro *De immortalitate animae* temere dictum notavi; non quia hoc falsum esse confirmo, sed quia nec verum esse comprehendendo, quod sit animal mundus."

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 602: "Sed animal esse istum mundum, sicut Plato sensit, aliique philosophi quamplurimi, nec ratione certa indagare potui, nec divinarum Scripturarum auctoritate persuaderi posse cognovi."

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, "Hoc sane inconcusse retinendum esse non dubito, Deum nobis non esse istum mundum, sive anima ejus ulla, sive nulla sit."

to him, he makes every effort to steer clear of pantheism. He fully realizes how close and conducive the doctrine of a world-soul is to the identification of God with the universe.

The problem of the *anima mundi*, which remained as a plausible hypothesis with St. Augustine till the end of his days, was one inherited from the Greek philosophers with whose thought he was imbued and whom he admired. The world, as it was conceived by Plato, was animated by a cosmic soul which gave movement and beauty to the whole corporeal mass.<sup>105</sup> The universe is thus likened in the Platonic description to an immense animal, a term which St. Augustine uses at times.<sup>106</sup> The world-soul of Plotinus, which is an emanation of God, the "One," is present wholly and indivisibly in the entire universe.<sup>107</sup> It is this world-soul which is productive of all things constituting the universe. The teaching of the Stoics on the world-soul is, as has been seen, plain pantheism.<sup>108</sup>

Even if the world is not animated by a spirit, in the manner in which a created soul pervades and animates a body, there are spiritual and vital forces operative in it which do not proceed directly from the divine nature, for God employs spirits to beautify and administer the universe through vital powers imparted to them.<sup>109</sup> Such a vital force lodged in a spiritual substance St.

<sup>105</sup> *Timaeus* 30; *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. by B. Jowett (New York: 1937), p. 14: "The world became a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God." *Ibid.*, 34 (p. 16): "And in the center he put the soul, which he diffused throughout the body, making it also to be the exterior environment of it."

<sup>106</sup> *Retract.*, I, 11, 4 (PL 32, 602; CSEL 36, 54).

<sup>107</sup> *Enneads*, IV, 8, 3; IV, 9, 1 (Volkmann, II, 153): "And in the universe is one soul present in all things, not divided as a thing which has mass is divided, but everywhere the same? . . . And if the world-soul and my soul are derived from one soul, then again they should be one." C. M. Bakewell, *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy* (New York: 1907), p. 350. Cf. also W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (3rd ed.; New York: 1931), I, 205: "The world-soul is not in the world; rather the world is in it, embraced by it and moulded by it."

<sup>108</sup> Cf. F. Picaret, *Essai sur l'histoire générale et comparée des théologies et des philosophies médiévales* (Paris: 1913), pp. 189 ff.; F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 388 f.

<sup>109</sup> *Retract.*, I, 11, 4 (PL 32, 602; CSEL 36 ed. P. Knöll, 55-56): "Esse tamen spiritualem vitalemque virtutem, etiam si non sit animal mundus; quae virtus in angelis sanctis ad decorandum atque administrandum mundum Deo servit, et a quibus non intelligitur; rectissime creditur."



Augustine calls a *spiritus* or *spiritus Dei*,<sup>110</sup> *spiritus vitae*,<sup>111</sup> *rectores-spiritus*;<sup>112</sup> and circumscriptively he refers to it as a *spiritualis et vitalis virtus*.<sup>113</sup> He also explicitly points out that this invisible spirit is neither God Himself nor any person of the Trinity, but a creature of God.<sup>114</sup>

The powers that Augustine ascribes to these spirits are those that he attributes in other places directly to God, such as the "containing" of the universe and the moving of corporeal bodies.<sup>115</sup> In reference to these spirits he asks a particular question from which a notion may be gained as to how he conceives their manner of presence or relationship to corporeal objects. He queries whether the conspicuous heavenly bodies are solely corporeal or whether they are governed by spirits. Again he asks if they are ruled by spirits, whether the plants and stars are vitally animated by spirits as bodies are by souls, or whether the spirits do not enter into any vital union with the heavenly body.<sup>116</sup> This obscure question is left unsolved.<sup>117</sup>

Some Christian apologists seem to have admitted some sort of animation of the universe by a spirit. Thus Tatian distinguishes between God, the supreme Spirit, and created spirits, whose office it is to pervade matter and animate it somewhat in the manner of a

<sup>110</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 17 (PL 34, 226; CSEL 28, ed. J. Zycha, I, 469).

<sup>111</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IX, 17, 32 (PL 34, 406; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 291); cf. St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 70, a. 3: "Augustinus etiam dicit corpora omnia administrari a Deo per spiritum vitae."

<sup>112</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, II, 18, 38 (PL 34, 279; CSEL 28, I, 62).

<sup>113</sup> *Retract.*, I, 11, 4 (PL 32, 602; CSEL 36, 54).

<sup>114</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 17 (PL 34, 226; CSEL 28, I, 469).

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*: "Potest autem et aliter intelligi ut spiritum Dei, vitale creaturam, qua universus iste visibilis mundus atque omnia corporea continentur et moventur, intelligamus, cui Deus omnipotens tribuit vim quamdam serviendi ad operandum in iis quae gignuntur. Qui spiritus cum sit omni corpore aethereo melior . . . non absurde spiritus Dei dicitur."

<sup>116</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, II, 18, 38 (PL 34, 279-80; CSEL 28, I, 62): "Solet etiam quaeri, utrum coeli luminaria ista conspicua corpora sola sint, an habeant rectores quosdam spiritus suos; et si habent, utrum ab eis etiam vitaliter inspicientur, sicut animantur carnes per animas animalium, an sola sine ulla permixtione praesentia."

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*; *Enchir.*, 58 (PL 40, 259-60); cf. St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 70, a. 3.

soul vivifying a body.<sup>118</sup> However, these Christian writers are careful to distinguish between the rank of this created spirit and God. For instance, Tatian observes that this spirit must not be worshipped with that cult which is due to God alone.<sup>119</sup>

More common and more definite is the doctrine of the apologists and early Christian writers on the angelic operations in nature. Athanagoras<sup>120</sup> teaches that God has entrusted such created spirits with matter and the administration of material species. Others, such as St. Justin,<sup>121</sup> Tertullian,<sup>122</sup> Lactantius,<sup>123</sup> allow angels the exercise of ministerial activities in the government of the world by controlling and guiding the course of man and nature.<sup>124</sup> Here, too, they have always been careful to distinguish angels as created and subordinate beings from the Creator of the universe and the supreme Spirit of all spirits.

### THE SPIRIT OF GOD

It is interesting to note the various possible interpretations in St. Augustine on the words of Genesis: "And the spirit of God moved over the waters,"<sup>125</sup> a passage which is relevant to the modes of God's presence.

In two works, where he speaks at some length of the scriptural passage as among the possible interpretations, Augustine shows preference for the literal sense, wherein by the spirit of God is meant a divine Person. In both passages he studiously explains the manner in which the Holy Ghost is present to the *materia informis* created by God. He is not spread over the created matter as oil

<sup>118</sup> *Letter to the Greeks*, 4 (PG 6, 813).

<sup>119</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>120</sup> *Apology or embassy for the Christians*, 24 (PG 6, 945-47).

<sup>121</sup> Cf. F. Andres, *Die Engellehre der griechischen Apologeten des zweiten Jahrhunderts* (Paderborn: 1914), p. 10.

<sup>122</sup> *De anima*, 37 (CSEL 20 ed. A. Reifferscheid and G. Wissowa, 363).

<sup>123</sup> E. Schneweis, *Angels and Demons according to Lactantius* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), pp. 56 ff.

<sup>124</sup> G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 27: "It seems that the Apologists were quite prepared to accept the existence of angelic forces whose function was to control and direct the operations of nature, in a manner which presents obvious similarities with Stoic doctrine, though they were careful to reckon such beings among creatures, and declined to confuse them with the transcendent God of the universe."

<sup>125</sup> Gen. I:2: "Et spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas."

is spread over water or water over the soil. Using a physical example, Augustine likens that presence of the divine Person to the light of the sun and moon, which illuminate the earth in a manner as not to be contained by them.<sup>126</sup> He furthermore describes this presence in a twofold manner: negatively, by asserting that this divine presence is not like that of material beings requiring space for their being;<sup>127</sup> and positively by expressing this presence in terms of the creative act of the Holy Ghost,<sup>128</sup> which creative operation is identified with the divine will.<sup>129</sup> It is in this manner, says St. Augustine, that we are to understand the words *Et spiritus Dei superferebatur super aquam*, if the *spiritus Dei* is assumed to be the *Spiritus sanctus*. This seems to be the preferential interpretation, as is evident from both contexts and from the fact that it is given first place in both passages.<sup>130</sup>

A second possible explanation of the passage is that proposed by those who hold that the *spiritus Dei* is a created spirit that animates the corporeal universe in the manner that a human soul is the vivifying principle of the human body. The function of such an animating principle is to cause or aid in the production of newly-begotten beings and to preserve the existing corporeal species. While St. Augustine admits the possibility of such a spirit suffused throughout the corporeal mass of the universe, in the passage found in his *Treatise to Simplicianus*, he does not accept this interpretation on the grounds that the Holy Ghost is not a

<sup>126</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 16 (PL 34, 226; CSEL 28, I, 468–69): “Non ita superferebatur sicut oleum aquae, vel aqua terrae, id est, quasi contineretur; sed, si ad hoc de visibilibus exempla capienda sunt, sicut superfertur lux ista solis aut lunae his corporibus, quae illuminat in terra: non enim continetur illis; sed cum coelo contineatur, istis superfertur.”

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*: “Item cavendum est ne quasi locorum spatiis Dei spiritum superferri materiae putemus.” *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 5 (PL 40, 133): “non locorum gradibus intervallisque spatiorum. . .”

<sup>128</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 16 (PL 34, 226; CSEL 28, I, 468–69): “vi quadam effectoria et fabricatoria, ut illud cui superfertur efficiatur, et fabrice-tur.”

<sup>129</sup> *De Gen., etc., ibid.*: “sicut superfertur artificis ligno, vel cuique rei subiectae ad operandum, vel etiam ipsis membris corporis sui, quae ad operandum movet.” *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 5 (PL 40, 133): “sed excellentia et eminentia dominantis super omnia voluntatis, ut omnia conderentur?”

<sup>130</sup> *De Gen., etc., ibid.*: “Hoc autem dictum sit, si hoc loco spiritus Dei Spiritus sanctus, quem in ipsa ineffabili et incommutabili Trinitate veneramus, accipitur.”

creature. In other words, St. Augustine is intent on explaining the Genesiac passage as referring to a divine Person.<sup>131</sup>

A third explanation is advanced. The *spiritus Dei* of the first lines of Genesis is interpreted by St. Augustine as an invisible, spiritual being which "contains" or sustains and moves all visible creatures to an orderly purpose. It thus brings about order, harmony, and beauty in creation. As to the nature or rank of this being, Augustine changes his position. In his exegesis of the passage, which was written to Simplicianus about 397, he does not see why the Holy Ghost cannot fulfill this function in the universe.<sup>132</sup> St. Augustine is showing all the time in the aforementioned passage that wherever *spiritus Dei* occurs in the Scriptures without any further addition, it can be made to refer to the third Person of the Holy Trinity.<sup>133</sup>

In his *De Genesi ad litteram, liber imperfectus*, written about 393, in which he explains the first twenty-six verses of Genesis, Augustine asserts that the Genesiac *spiritus Dei* can be understood as referring to a "vital creature" (*vitalis creatura*), by which the visible universe and all corporeal beings are contained and moved. He asserts that this spirit is not God Himself but God's creature.<sup>134</sup> In other words, it is a spirit to whom God imparts a certain power which accounts for the motion and vitality in the inanimate universe.<sup>135</sup> This spirit not only ranks higher than all material objects

<sup>131</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 1, 5 (PL 40, 133): "Non ergo cogit quod dictum est, 'Et spiritus Dei superferebatur super aquam,' illum intelligere spiritum, sicut nonnulli volunt, quo mundi moles universa ista corporea velut animatur, ad ministerium quorumque gignentium, et in sua specie continentium corporalium creaturarum. Creatura est enim quidquid est tale."

<sup>132</sup> *De div., etc., ibid.*: "Illud etiam quod scriptum est, 'Quoniam spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum' (Sap. 1:7), non desunt qui eundem spiritum velint accipi, invisibilem scilicet creaturam cuncta visibilia universali quadam conspiratione vegetantem atque continentem. Sed neque hic video quid impediatur intelligere Spiritum sanctum, cum ipse Deus dicat apud prophetam, 'Coelum et terram ego impleo' (Jer. 23:24). Non enim sine suo Spiritu sancto implet Deus coelum et terram. Quid ergo mirum si de Spiritu sancto ejus dictum est, 'Replevit orbem terrarum'?"

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, (Col. 134).

<sup>134</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 17 (PL 34, 226-27; CSEL 28, I, 469): "spiritus, qui tamen etiam ipse creatura esset, id est non Deus, sed a Deo facta atque instituta natura."

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*: "Potest autem et aliter intelligi, ut spiritum Dei, vitalem creaturam,



which are subject to his power, but also appears to be other than angels and superior to them.<sup>136</sup> St. Augustine makes this interpretation of the passage dependent upon the exegesis of the antecedent line of Genesis, viz., "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." If this initial verse of Genesis is interpreted to mean only visible creatures, then the *spiritus Dei* can be understood as referring to this invisible spirit who pervaded all created visible matter.<sup>137</sup> If this initial verse, however, is understood to mean the creation of the absolute universality of beings—comprising corporeal and spiritual creatures—then the phrase *spiritus Dei* can designate only the divine Person of the Holy Trinity. It will thus mean that the Holy Trinity was borne over the *materia informis* of all things which was created by God.<sup>138</sup>

In the passage of *De Genesi ad litteram*, he enumerates a fourth possible explanation of the *spiritus Dei* in making it refer to air, which was believed to be one of the constitutive elements of all things. St. Augustine finds that the term *spiritus* is used by Sacred Scripture in various significations. Thus he establishes that it commonly refers to the Holy Ghost. He also finds it referring to the spirit of man and of animals (Gen. VI:17; VII:22), and at times even to the wind or air (Ps. 148:8).<sup>139</sup> "Spirit" therefore designates the element of air, but it also insinuates the other elements constituting all things. The four constitutive elements which Augustine enumerates are heaven and earth, water and air. These four ele-

qua universus iste visibilis mundus atque omnia corporea continentur et moventur, intelligamus; cui Deus omnipotens tribuit vim quamdam sibi serviendi ad operandum in iis quae gignuntur."

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*: "Qui spiritus cum sit omni corpore aethereo melior, quia omnem visibilem creaturam omnis invisibilis creatura antecedit, non absurde spiritus Dei dicitur." Since St. Augustine taught that angels are constituted of some refined, ethereal matter, he is interpreted here as referring to angels by the words *corpus aethereum*.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*: "Sed tunc potest iste spiritus sic intelligi, si quod dictum est, 'In principio fecit Deus coelum et terram' tantum de visibili creatura dictum sentiamus; ut super materiam rerum visibilium in exordio fabricationis earum superferretur invisibilis spiritus. . . ."

<sup>138</sup> *Loc. cit.* (col. 227): "Si autem universae creaturae, id est intellectualis et animalis et corporalis, materia creditur illo aquae vocabulo enuntiata, nullo modo hoc loco, spiritus Dei potest nisi ille incommutabilis et sanctus intelligi, qui ferebatur super materiam omnium rerum, quas fecit et condidit Deus."

<sup>139</sup> *Sermo* 128, 7, 7 (PL 38, 717; *De Trinit.*, XIV, 16, 22 (PL 42, 1053).

ments were not distinct when the action of the Holy Ghost was exercised in the first stage of creation but they were already foreshadowed as arising from the confusion of prime matter.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>140</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 18 (PL 34, 227; CSEL 28, I, 470): "Tertia opinio de hoc spiritu oriri potest, ut credatur spiritus nomine, aeris elementum enuntiatur; ut ita quattuor elementa insinuata sint, quibus mundus iste visibilis surgit; coelum scilicet, et terra, et aqua, et aer: non quia jam erant distincta et ordinata; sed quia in illius materiae quamvis informi confusione, tamen exortura praesignabantur. . . ."

## CHAPTER V

### THE NATURE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

#### GOD PRESENT *ubique totus*

IT has been seen that material beings have their proper mode of presence, and spiritual beings their own. It has, likewise, in part been seen that elevated above these classes of beings is the supreme Spirit, *spiritus quidam summus*,<sup>1</sup> who is in a class all by Himself in regard to the nature of His being as well as to the consequent mode of presence.

Before St. Augustine's time, it had already become the custom among Greek<sup>2</sup> as well as Latin Fathers<sup>3</sup> to illustrate the more abstruse concept of the presence of God by the more proximate concept of the presence of the human soul. Augustine himself resorts frequently to this analogy.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, it was through him more than anyone else that it became customary in the pre-scholastic and scholastic periods to present the presence of the soul in the body and of God in the universe side by side and in technical fashion. The technical terms, however, to express these diverse presences—*praesentia circumscriptiva, definitiva et repletiva*—are of a post-Augustinian period, and were gradually introduced and established in the philosophy and the theology of the period.<sup>5</sup>

The presence of material beings which was most obvious and a starting point leading towards a conception of the divine pres-

<sup>1</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* XIII, 6 (PL 35, 1546).

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Origenes, in *Jer.* XXIII, 24 (PG 13, 571; GCS 3, ed. E. Klosterman, 206).

<sup>3</sup> E.g., S. Hilarius, *Tract. in Ps.* 118, 19, 8 (CSEL 22, ed. A. Zingerle, 526-27).

<sup>4</sup> E.g., *Ep.*, 137, 2, 4 (PL 33, 517; CSEL 44, III, ed. A. Goldbacher, 101).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. for example, Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiarum Libri Quatuor*, I. 1, 37, 1 (PL 192, 621).

ence was described and termed by the early Greek Fathers as a circumscriptive presence. The precise phrase *praesentia circumscriptiva* does not occur in Augustinian writings, although the notion involved in it is developed by St. Augustine far beyond its early Greek patristic status. He does, however, use the phrase *circumscripta quantitate* in connection with presence when he says that God must not be conceived as circumscribed by quantity and figure.<sup>6</sup> He certainly makes use of expressions and descriptions which are equivalent to the patristic and scholastic terms later used to express this idea.<sup>7</sup>

If the soul has a nature which is so much different from the material body, how much more different, St. Augustine argues, is the nature of God who creates the soul and the body.<sup>8</sup> If the presence of the soul in the body is more perfect than the presence of the body in space, how much more perfect must be the presence of God in the universe? St. Augustine exclaims, "If He is God, He is everywhere present."<sup>9</sup> Just as eternity is an exclusive characteristic of the true divinity in relation to man's conception of time, so omnipresence is proper to God alone in relation to place. Eternity and omnipresence are attributes that deny limitations of time and place.

As a summary, let us first repeat, by literally leaning on St. Augustine's own expressions, the manner in which God is not present. God is not *enclosed* in place;<sup>10</sup> He is not *circumscribed* by place;<sup>11</sup> He is not *contained* in place; for whatever is contained in place belongs necessarily to the category of material bodies.<sup>12</sup> He is not *confined* to any place or places, for He fills *all* places with His presence.<sup>13</sup> God, therefore, strictly speaking, is not to be said

<sup>6</sup> *Sermo* 23, 6, 6 (PL 38, 157).

<sup>7</sup> E.g., *Confes.*, V, 2, 2 (PL 32, 707; ed. M. Skutella, 77).

<sup>8</sup> *Ep.* 137, 2, 4 (PL 33, 517; CSEL 44, III, 101).

<sup>9</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 74, 9 (PL 36, 952).

<sup>10</sup> *Sermo* 277, 14, 14 (PL 38, 1265); *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313): "nullis inclusis locis."

<sup>11</sup> *Confes.*, V, 2, 2 (PL 32, 707; ed. M. Skutella, 77): "quem [Deum] nullus circumscribit locus."

<sup>12</sup> *De div. quaest.*, 83, 1, 20 (PL 40, 15-16); *Sermo* 242, 3 (PL 38, 1502-3); *Sermo* 12, 3, 3 (PL 38, 101); *Enar. in Ps.* 34, 6 (PL 36, 337); *De sermone Domini in monte*, II, 5, 17 (PL 35, 127): "non enim spatium locorum, etc."

<sup>13</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* XXXI, 9 (PL 35, 1640).



to be *somewhere*, for whatever is designated as being somewhere is in a place, but God cannot be said to be in a place.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, because God is not somewhere but is present everywhere, it is not correct to ascribe to Him motion or transition from place to place.<sup>15</sup> The Bishop of Hippo warns us: "Only let us not try to bring God to place, let us not try to include God in place, let us not try to diffuse God through spaces, as it were, by some mass; let us not dare that, let us not think it."<sup>16</sup> And again: "Do not think of God to be in places;"<sup>17</sup> for "if He were in place, He would not be God."<sup>18</sup> And thus we discern the application of the negative process, whereby the imperfections surrounding the mode of presence proper to created quantitative beings are removed from the all-perfect God.

God has a distinctive mode of presence, which is altogether different from that of material beings, but the divine presence also transcends in its perfection the mode of presence of all other spiritual beings. Presence is an attribute, a perfection and is, therefore, something which is to be found in the divine Being. But God is present in, and to the whole universe in such a manner as to be whole in the whole universe and whole in every part of creation, including the minutest and most insignificant part.<sup>19</sup> St. Augustine succinctly expresses this type of presence with the Latin idiom *ubique totus*; elsewhere he describes it more exactly when he says *ubique simul totus*.<sup>20</sup> The reason why God is not *in loco* is that He is *ubique totus*.<sup>21</sup> And Augustine expatiates upon what he means

<sup>14</sup> *De div. quaest.*, 83, 1, 20 (PL 40, 15-16).

<sup>15</sup> *In lo. Ev. tr.* XXXI, 9 (PL 35, 1640); *De civ. Dei*, XVI, 5 (PL 41, 483; ed. Dombart-Kalb II [Lipsiae: 1929], 131): "non loco movetur Deus, qui semper est ubique totus."

<sup>16</sup> *Sermo* 277, 14, 14 (PL 38, 1265).

<sup>17</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 74, 9 (PL 36, 952).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ep.* 187, 5, 17 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 95): "Ideo enim ubique esse dicitur, quia nulli parti rerum absens est, ideo totus, quia non parti rerum partem suam praesentem praebet, et alteri parti alteram partem, aequales aequalibus, minori vero minorem, majorique majorem; sed non solum universitati creaturae, verum etiam cuilibet parti ejus totus pariter adest."

<sup>20</sup> *Sermo* 277, 13, 13 (PL 38, 1264-65).

<sup>21</sup> *De symbolo ad catech.*, II, 2 (PL 40, 662); *Sermo* 53, 8 (PL 38, 367); *De mor. Eccles.*, I, 11, 19 (PL 32, 1320).

by saying that God is present everywhere and wholly present in all places:

On this account is He said to be everywhere, because He is absent to no part; on this account is He said to be whole, because He presents not one part of Himself to a part of things, and another part of Himself to another part of things, equal part to equal parts [of things], a less to lesser parts, greater to a greater part; but He is equally present as a whole not only to the whole of the universe, but also to each part of it.<sup>22</sup>

Taking care to remove every taint of anthropomorphism and materialism from the conception of God, St. Augustine frequently dilates upon this type of presence which is specific to God. And thus he points out, by way of example, that God fills heaven and earth in accordance with the scriptural passage, not, however, in a manner that one half of God is in heaven and the other half on earth. Water, for instance, occupies a certain space; the whole of the water occupies the whole space, but parts of the water occupy parts of the space. Thus it is not wholly in the whole space and wholly in every part of the space. Even such a refined material substance as air fills the heavens and the earth, but in such a way that half of it is in the upper regions and the other half is here below. Nor is the half which is in the heavens the same as that here on earth. "God is not of that sort; because God [is] whole everywhere; not half in one place and constituted by His other half in another; but He is everywhere whole. He fills heaven and earth; but He is whole in heaven and whole on earth."<sup>23</sup>

The trenchant phrase "whole everywhere"—*ubique totus*—as significative of the divine presence, has been known to the Greek Fathers,<sup>24</sup> although much less than to the Latin Fathers, by whom

<sup>22</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 18 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 96).

<sup>23</sup> *Sermo* 277, 13, 13 (PL 38, 1264): "In loco non videtur Deus, per partes non videtur Deus, spatiis diffusus intervallisque separatus non videtur Deus. Quamvis impleat coelum et terram, non ideo tamen dimidius est in coelo, dimidius in terra. Nam aer iste si implet coelum et terram; pars ejus quae in coelo est, non est in terra. Et quidquid aqua implet, implet quidem spatium quo capitur, sed dimidia est in dimidio spatio, dimidia in alio dimidio, tota in toto. Non est tale aliquid Deus. . . . Nihil tale Deus; quia ubique totus Deus: non alibi dimidius, et alibi alio dimidio constitutus; sed ubique totus. Implet coelum et terram: sed totus est in coelo, totus in terra."

<sup>24</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *On the incomprehensible Nature of God*, 1, 3 (PG 38, 704): "I also know many things but I do not know how; I know that God

it has been crystallized into a definite expression containing an epitome of their theology on the presence of God.<sup>25</sup> This is most true of St. Augustine, whose frequent and constant use of the phrase to express the peculiar mode of divine presence lent it a technical ring.<sup>26</sup> The same expression prevailed throughout the patristic period,<sup>27</sup> subsequent to St. Augustine. It was inherited also by the scholastic theologians, who, having perfected the doctrine on the modes of presence and having established a better terminology, supplanted the terms *ubique totus* by the *praesentia repletiva*. Although the patristic expression "everywhere whole" and the scholastic terms "repletive presence" are equivalent in meaning, the patristic epithet is more emphatic and expressive of the indivisibility of God in His presence.

This presence of God, therefore, is not a material presence and can in no way be compared to the presence proper to material beings because it is essentially different, as the subjects themselves are essentially different. God has no quantity which could be circumscribed and through which He would be in place.<sup>28</sup> God is not a body (*corpus*), as the Bishop of Hippo so often repeats as if to atone for his former error in this matter. His presence is called a spiritual presence because it is proper to spiritual substances;<sup>29</sup> and yet it is essentially different from the presence of created spiritual beings, just as the divine spiritual substance is essentially different from created spiritual beings.

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is everywhere, and I know that He is everywhere present whole; but how I do not know." *Id.*, *In Ps.* 138, 2 (PG 55, 413): "Thou art present to all things whole"; St. Basil, *On the Holy Ghost*, 22 (PG 32, 108): "[The Holy Ghost] is present whole to individuals and is whole everywhere."

<sup>25</sup> Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*, 6, 4 (PL 5, 1169-70; CSEL 4, ed. A. Reffer-scheid, 217); St. Hilary, *De Trinitate*, II, 6 (PL 10, 55): "Deus autem et ubique est, et totus ubicunque est." *Id.*, *Tract. in Ps.* 144, 21 (PL 9, 863; CSEL 22, ed. A. Zingerle, 838); St. Jerome, *Comment. in Ep. ad Eph.*, 1, 2 (PL 26, 472-73).

<sup>26</sup> *Ep.* 187, *passim*; *De civ. Dei*, XVI, 5 (PL 41, 483; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 131); *ibid.*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 313); *Confess.*, VI, 3, 4 (PL 32, 721; ed. M. Skutella, 103); *ibid.*, I, 3, 3 (PL 32, 662; ed. M. Skutella, 3); *Sermo* 53, 8 (PL 38, 367); *Sermo* 277, 13, 13 (PL 38, 1264); *Ep.* 137, 2, 4 (PL 33, 517; CSEL 44, ed. A. Goldbacher, III, 101); *In Io. Ev.* tr. I, 8 (PL 35, 1383).

<sup>27</sup> Cf., for example, Gregory the Great, *Moralia*, II, 12, 20 (PL 75, 565); Aurelius Cassiod., *Expositio in Ps.* 138, 6 (PL 70, 986): "Nam ubique et tota esse non potest, nisi sola Trinitas."

<sup>28</sup> *Sermo* 23, 5, 5 (PL 38, 157); *De mor. Eccles.*, I, II, 19 (PL 32, 1320).

<sup>29</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 81, 2 (PL 37, 1047); *Sermo* 53, 6, 7 (PL 38, 367).

## GOD "CONTAINS" THE UNIVERSE

Above and beyond the mode of presence of the created and limited spirit, God is so present whole in the whole universe and whole in every part of it as not to be contained in, or confined by, the created universe.<sup>30</sup> The expression that God is not "contained" by the universe but, inversely, that the universe is "contained" by God occurs not infrequently among Greek philosophers and recurs again and again in patristic literature. It constituted the core of the theology of the divine presence for centuries, for it expressed the relationship of the universe to God. The determination of this relationship became the Scylla and Charybdis of thinkers of old who steered in the direction either of monism or of Manichean dualism.

As has already been pointed out when the doctrine of the Fathers was considered, the Latin *continere* and the corresponding English translations of it by the word "to contain" have a twofold meaning. In what was called a static sense, the term signifies the incircumscriptive immensity and ubiquity of God on the one hand, and the finiteness and circumscriptive presence of all other created things on the other. Thus if God is said to contain and yet Himself to be uncontained in this sense, it must mean that God's infinity or uncircumscribed immensity<sup>31</sup> cannot be encompassed by the whole universe, but all things are encompassed by God. The same term of "containing" in Latin is used in the dynamic sense and means the divine power of holding the universe or created things together and thus preserving them in their existence. The Latin *continere* in the first meaning corresponds to the Greek usages of *achóretos* and *periéchein*; in the second sense, it translates the Greek *synéchein*.

These two concepts involved in the verb "to contain" are either identified or inseparably bound up with God's presence in the universe. If the "containing" by God refers to His incircumscriptive immensity, it denotes the omnipresence of God as opposed to the mode of presence of finite beings. If the "containing" by God denotes the divine power of conservation, it is inseparably related

<sup>30</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 14 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 92).

<sup>31</sup> St. Hilary, *De Trinit.*, I, 7 (PL 10, 30).



in the minds of the Fathers to the divine omnipresence which they conceive as active and operative in a universe created by it. Conservation and omnipresence necessarily follow upon creation, and are a certain continuation of the creative act.

The meaning of *continere* can be determined at times by the opposing error which is present to the mind of the writers or by the heresy that they are actually combating. The Fathers express the divine presence by saying that God is within all beings as filling,<sup>32</sup> penetrating, permeating, pervading, or being diffused through all things.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, they emphatically teach that God is not contained in, or confined to, created things but is beyond them.<sup>34</sup> They express this presence by saying that He is *intra* and *extra* all things.<sup>35</sup> By maintaining that God is outside (*extra*) all things, they defend the infinite character of God's substance and presence, and teach His transcendence. In other words, they teach His immensity.<sup>36</sup> By stating that He is within (*intra*) all things they teach the indispensability of the divine power for the maintenance of creatures in existence.

St. Augustine also uses *continere* to denote the immensity and incomprehensibility (in a cosmological, and not a cognitive sense) of the divine substance and power, as, for example, when explaining the hovering of the Holy Ghost about the prime matter—*materia informis* of Genesis 1:2. Arguing against the Manicheans, Augustine denies that this passage can be interpreted in the sense of a local presence in the water or *materia informis*, as if the Holy Spirit were contained by it.<sup>37</sup> For, to use Augustine's examples, the Holy Ghost did not move over the water as oil flows over the surface of the water or as the water moves over the soil and physi-

<sup>32</sup> St. Athanasius, *Ad Serapionem*, Ep. 3 (PG 26, 630-31); St. Leo, *Sermo* LXXVI, 3; St. Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto*, I, 7, 81 (PL 16, 723).

<sup>33</sup> E.g., St. Cyril of Alexandria, *In Io. Ev.* I, 9 (PG 73, 130); Nemesius Emesenus, *De natura hominis*, 3 (PG 40, 606); St. Hilary, *De Trinitate*, III (PL 10, 76).

<sup>34</sup> St. Athanasius, *loc. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> St. Hilary, *De Trinitate*, I, 6 (PL 10, 29).

<sup>36</sup> St. Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto*, I, 7, 81, 82, 86 (PL 16, 723 f.); St. Hilary, *De Trinitate*, I, 7 (PL 10, 30).

<sup>37</sup> *De Gen. contra Manich.*, I, 5, 8 (PL 34, 176); cf. J. R. Maher, "St. Augustine's Defense of the Hexaemeron," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, VI (1944), 460.

cally covers it; in both instances the one substance is contained by the other.<sup>38</sup> The Saint, however, does adduce from the material universe an example which approximates in some tangible way the spiritual manner in which the Holy Ghost was present to the initial work of creation. For He was there filling and acting in prime matter as the light of the sun or the moon is present in bodies which are illuminated by them upon earth; the light is not contained in them in a manner as to be exhausted or enclosed by them, but is suffused in them, and yet it shines beyond them.<sup>39</sup>

In St. Augustine, therefore, as in the other earlier Fathers, we find that the notions of God filling, pervading, permeating, and containing the universe are expressly or implicitly identified with, or correlated to, the divine presence. In addition to these notions, there is one thought of St. Augustine which is outstanding in the theology formed around God's omnipresence; viz., he closely associates the existence and dependence of creatures with the divine presence. Created entities cannot have being, unless there be an uncreated Being; created beings cannot have existence unless there exist an Existence whose being is existence. Likewise created beings cannot be present, unless a ubiquitous Presence which is the cause and support of every finite presence, coexist with them. To be or to be present God does not need the universe which would serve as a receptacle to hold and encompass Him. Although all created beings, whether they be corporeal or spiritual, require some spatial or local substrate for their being and existence, the divine Being has no need of such a prerequisite.

Augustine illustrates this doctrine of the divine presence by a series of examples. Thus, corporeal beings depend for their existence upon the space in which they are placed. Take away space, and quantitative bodies cannot naturally exist.<sup>40</sup> So also qualities, such as health and color, cannot exist unless they inhere in the quantity of the body, although they are not measured by that

<sup>38</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 16 (PL 34, 226; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 468-69): "Non ita superferebatur sicut oleum aquae, vel aqua terrae, id est, quasi contineretur."

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*: "Si ad hoc de visibilibus exempla capienda sunt, sicut superfertur lux ista solis aut lunae his corporalibus, quae illuminat in terra: non enim continetur illis; sed cum coelo contineatur, istis superfertur."

<sup>40</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 18 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 96).

quantity.<sup>41</sup> This teaching is also verified in spiritual substances. The soul's presence is determined by the extension of the body which it animates and does not extend beyond those delimitations. The presence of angels and separated souls is likewise limited and local, although not circumscriptive as that of quantitative substances. Both angels and souls require a receptacle, as it were, in which they are and by which their presence is determined.

Speaking of the soul separated from its body, Augustine casually remarks that in the next life God will be the place for it.<sup>42</sup> In another work<sup>43</sup> where the problem of the place for the soul in the future life is treated with more deliberation and precision he poses the question whether the separated soul will be carried to a corporeal place, or to an incorporeal place which is similar to bodies, or to a superior, spiritual place. To which he responds with certainty that it is not carried to a corporeal place, unless it should have a body attached to it. If it is to be borne to a penal place, such a place would have some likeness to a corporeal place. Should however the soul have a perfectly meritorious exit out of this life into the next it would be brought to a purely spiritual place.

Elsewhere<sup>44</sup> Augustine explains this independence of God and

<sup>41</sup> *Ep.* 187, VI, 18 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 96): "Tolle ipsa corpora qualitibus corporum, non erit, ubi sint, et ideo necesse est, ut non sint, etenim cum per totam suam molem corpus aequaliter sanum est aut aequaliter candidum, non est in ulla quam in alia parte ejus sanitas major aut candor nec major in toto quam in parte, quia non sanius aut candidius totum constat esse quam partem. Si autem inaequaliter sit sanum aut inaequaliter candidum, fieri potest ut in minore parte sit sanitas major aut candor, cum minora quam majora saniora vel candidiora sunt membra; usque adeo non mole constat quod in qualitibus magnum dicitur esse vel parvum. Verumtamen si moles ipsa corporis, quantacumque vel quantulacumque sit, penitus auferatur, qualitates ejus non erit ubi sint, quamvis non mole metiendae sint."

<sup>42</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 30, *Sermo* 3, 8 (PL 36, 252): "Ipse (Deus) post hanc vitam sit locus noster."

<sup>43</sup> *De Gen. ad lib.*, XII, 32, 60 (PL 34, 480; CSEL 28): "Si autem quaeritur, cum anima de corpore exieret, utrum ad aliqua loca corporalia feratur, an ad incorporea corporalibus similia, an vero nec ad ipsa, sed ad illud quod et corporibus et similitudinibus corporum est excellentius; cito quidem responderim, ad corporalia loca eam vel non ferri nisi cum aliquo corpore, vel non localiter ferri. . . . Ad spiritualia vero pro meritis fertur, aut ad loca poenalia similia corporalibus."

<sup>44</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, 83, 1, 20 (PL 40, 15-16): "Deus non alicubi est. Quod enim alicubi est, continetur loco: quod continetur loco, corpus est. Deus autem non est corpus: non igitur alicubi est. Et tamen quia est, et in loco

the dependence of creation upon God by stating that created material and immaterial substances are in God, rather than by saying that God is in them. He warns us, however, that they are not in God as if God were a place in which created objects are located, for place is naturally and necessarily determined by the three dimensions which are occupied by the body in space. Yet all things are in Him in the sense that they are dependent upon Him for their existence and cannot continue to be without Him. Both of these conditions require His presence to the object thus existing and sustained. Or, as St. Augustine prayerfully says in his *Confessions*, he himself would not and could not be in existence unless God were present in Him,<sup>45</sup> or still better, unless he be in God.<sup>46</sup> "If I remain not in Him, neither shall I in myself."<sup>47</sup>

The meaning of *continere* in the sense of the divine immensity, uncircumscribed itself but circumscribing all things, is succinctly found in Augustine's mature treatise, *On the Presence of God* to Dardanus. "God," says the Bishop of Hippo in this work, "is everywhere present *in seipso*,"<sup>48</sup> and he explains this dictum by saying that God is not contained in, or encompassed by, the things in which He is present as if He could not be without them. Other entities need God for their existence; without Him nothing and no one would or could be.<sup>49</sup> But they also need, as it were, a created substratum in which to exist; they need space in which to be contained, a place in which they are. God is the subsisting Being (*esse subsistens*), Being itself (*ipsum esse*), and He needs no universe or beings in which to be; He would exist even if all other beings did not exist.<sup>50</sup> In order to be, things need God to be with or in them; but God needs not that things exist, in order that He,

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non est, in illo sunt potius omnia, quam ipse alicubi. Nec tamen ita in illo, ut ipse sit locus: locus enim in spatio est quod longitudine et latitudine et altitudine corporis occupatur; nec Deus tale aliquid est. Et omnia igitur in ipso sunt, et locus non est."

<sup>45</sup> *Confess.*, I, 2, 2 (PL 32, 661; ed. M. Skutella, 2): "Quoniam itaque et ego sum, quid peto, ut venias in me, qui non essem, nisi esses in me?"

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*: "an potius non essem, nisi essem in te?"

<sup>47</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 11, 17 (PL 32, 742).

<sup>48</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 18 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 96).

<sup>49</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1078): "sine quo esse nemo potest."

<sup>50</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 18 (PL 33, 839; CSEL 57, IV, 97): "... nec in quibus est, ita est, ut indigeat eis, tamquam non possit esse nisi in eis."



too, may be.<sup>51</sup> Before God created things, places, and time, He was.<sup>52</sup> Consequently, even now after they exist, they do not serve as a substrate, container, or necessary prerequisite for His existence. This condition of God's independence from space, locality, or any other entity is expressed by Augustine when he says that God is *totus in seipso*. It is in this manner that the Saint explicitly explains the meaning of this phrase.<sup>53</sup>

### NEOPLATONIC INFLUENCE

Likenesses and dissimilarities in the concept of God found in the writings of Plotinus and St. Augustine have already been pointed out. It may likewise be observed that many expressions employed by the great luminary of the western Church, about the presence of God and the relationship of the universe to God, are definitely reminiscent of Plotinian language. Thus Plotinus, speaking of the independence, spirituality, and non-configuration of his God, says:

The "One" is happiness. Furthermore, it is not to be found in space, seeing that it needs no space as if it were not able to support itself. What has spatial position is inanimate and is a falling mass if it be not placed in position. Things have position for the same reason that they coexist, and each has the place to which it has been assigned. What needs, however, a place in space wants something.<sup>54</sup>

Not only the terminology but also the philosophical themes of St. Augustine concerning God and His attributes are akin, in many respects, to the religious ideology of the Neoplatonic philosophers. It will be remembered, however, that Augustine did not indiscriminately borrow philosophy or religious thought from the unchris-

<sup>51</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 113, 1, 14 (PL 37, 1481): "Ergo in quibus est ipse, tamquam indigentia continet, non ab eis tamquam indigens continetur." *Sermo* 342, 3 (PL 39, 1502): "Sic erat hic, ut et antequam mundus esset, non quasi non haberet ubi esset. Deus enim habitando continet, non continetur." *De mor. Eccles.*, I, 11, 19 (PL 32, 1320).

<sup>52</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 122, 4 (PL 37, 1632): "Et antequam faceret Deus sanctos, ubi habitabat? In se habitabat Deus, apud se habitabat, et apud se est Deus."

<sup>53</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 18 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 96): "in se ipso autem, quia non continetur ab eis, quibus est praesens, tamquam sine his esse non possit."

<sup>54</sup> Thus, for example, *Enneads*, VI, 9 (Volkman, II, 515). Translated by B. A. G. Fuller in C. M. Bakewell, *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy* (New York: 1907), p. 369. Cf. also C. Boyer, *L'idée de vérité dans la philosophie de Saint Augustin* (2e éd.; Paris: 1941), p. 120, footnote 5.

tian world which surrounded him. Consider the *Enneads* of Plotinus which he estimated to be the best philosophico-religious product of the times. Although he made use of its thought and expressions extensively there are no indications in St. Augustine's works that he suffered any deleterious influence which would be incompatible with Christian tradition. The Bishop knew how to make use of the good and usable, and how to sift and reject the unusable and unchristian.

What is uppermost in the mind of the African Doctor is to present the God of Sacred Scripture and of tradition in a lucid, yet scientific way—in a manner which would be appealing and convincing to minds which, like his own, had sought the true God in the systems of philosophy and religious thought of the day. He presents the Christian God with the aid of that philosophy which he considered the most acceptable of the day and the most proximate to the truth. It was a philosophy which could lend its authority and achievements to confirm, corroborate, and establish what the revelation of the both Testaments and the Fathers have to say on the nature of the true God. Augustine uses, therefore, the philosophy of the *Enneads* of Plotinus to give a more solid, a more philosophical basis for what is contained in Sacred Writ and Christian tradition on the nature of God. Thus Neoplatonic philosophy furnishes him with the light of natural reason, the instrument of systematization and the power of proof. Furthermore, it serves him as a bridge linking the attainments of the unaided mind of the philosopher with the revelations of God, thus showing what is common to the natural and supernatural realms.

Indeed, St. Augustine has borrowed not a little from the pages of Greek philosophers in the great and astounding work of developing Christian philosophy and theology. Whatever elements he has taken over, however, do not stand as something isolated and conspicuous, individual and unintegrated, but fit into a whole of which they are made to form an integral part. It may appear strange, but even when he is dependent upon others he appears to be original; that which he has borrowed is digested and appropriated to the extent that it becomes his own, and that which was old becomes new.<sup>55</sup> This was possible because an old philosophy was

<sup>55</sup> R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (3 Aufl.; Erlangen und Leipzig: 1923), p. 399.

to serve as a channel for a new doctrine; the doctrine lent its vitality to philosophy, and a sober philosophy extended its support to the doctrine. And thus philosophy found not only its perfection in the revealed doctrine (as the apologists argued against the philosophers of their day) but also its very survival. For in the Middle Ages when the *Enneads* of Plotinus were not accessible, his philosophy, to some extent, had a lease on life through the writings of St. Augustine.

### DIVERSITY OF BEINGS

In explaining the difference between the modes of presence that are proper to diverse beings St. Augustine is led to suggest the most basic reason, the metaphysical foundation for that difference. The mode of presence follows the nature of the being, which is present. There is an essential difference between the created and the uncreated Being. The created being is by its very nature dependent: it has being and existence from another being. The uncreated Being is His own being, His own life, His own existence, His own intellect, and His own will. He does not have participated being and participated life; His existence is not borrowed from another superior being as from a cause.<sup>56</sup> This kind of being and life in God postulates the immutability of God. Therein lies the difference not only between a material created being and God, but also between the soul, which is spiritual, and God, who is a spirit. The participated being and life of the soul are subject to continual mutability, whereas God is eternally immutable.

God lives, as does the soul: but the life of God is immutable, the life of the soul is mutable. God does not make progress, nor does He become less: but He is always in Himself (*in se*), He is such as He is; not otherwise now, otherwise afterwards, and otherwise before. The life of the soul is altogether different: it was foolish, it is wise; it was sinful, it is righteous: now it remembers, now it forgets; now it learns, now it cannot learn; now it loses what it has learned, now it perceives what it has lost; the life of the soul is changeable.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 19, 11 (PL 35, 1548): "Non alibi habet vitam, sed in semetipso. Vivere quippe suum in illo est; non aliunde, non alienum est: non quasi mutatur vitam, nec quasi particeps fit vitae, ejus vitae quae non est quod ipse; sed habet vitam in semetipso, ut ipsa vita sibi sit ipse."

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. also *De natura boni contra Manich.*, I (PL 42, 552; CSEL 25 ed. J. Zycha, II, 855).

The changeable lies within the range of time and place; the immutable (and there is only one such Being, God) is beyond the reaches of time and place. Whatever is mutable in time and place, and whatever is movable through time and space is created, finite, and contingent. The infinite, necessary and immutable Being cannot be embraced by time and place. God, therefore, does not move in time and place, but He moves all corporeal and spiritual beings in both these universal receptacles. This action on the part of God does not denote or involve any change, as it would in creatures, because the power of God is transcendental. God is *within* all creatures, since they cannot subsist without God. Thus God, the cause of their existence, must be within them to hold them together and to sustain them. God is *outside* all creatures, because He, with His substance and power, is infinitely above all creatures. His existence is not the same as the existence of other beings; His essence is not the same as the essence of other created beings. Nor is He subject to the succession or intervals of time.<sup>58</sup> He is older than all things because He is before them, but He is also more recent than they, because He remains the very same after them. He is changeless eternity.<sup>59</sup> Place and time began only with crea-

<sup>58</sup> For Augustine's philosophical concept of time, see J. Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotin et Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1933); J. Chaix-Ruy, "La perception du temps chez saint Augustin," in *Saint Augustin, Nouvelle Journée*, XVII, 17-93; J. F. Callahan, *Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1948). For Augustine's historical concept of time in the economy of salvation, see H. I. Marrou, *L'ambivalence du temps de l'histoire chez Saint Augustin* (Montreal: 1950).

<sup>59</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 265): "Quae cum ita sint, cum Deus omnipotens et omnitenens, incommutabili aeternitate, veritate, voluntate semper idem, non per tempus nec per locum motus, movet per tempus creaturam spiritualement, movet etiam per tempus et locum creaturam corporalem; ut eo motu naturas quas intrinsecus substituit, etiam extrinsecus administret, et per voluntates sibi subditas, quas per tempus, et per corpora sibi atque illis voluntatibus subdita, quae per tempus et locum movet, eo tempore ac loco cujus ratio in ipso Deo vita est sine tempore ac loco: cum ergo tale aliquid Deus agit, non debemus opinari ejus substantiam qua Deus est, temporibus locisque mutabilem, aut per tempora et loca mobilem, sed in opere divinae providentiae ista cognoscere; non in illo opere quo naturas creat, sed in illo quo intrinsecus creatas etiam extrinsecus administrat, cum sit ipse, nullo locorum vel intervallo vel spatio, incommutabili excellentique potentia et interior omni re, quia in ipso sunt omnia, et exterior omni re, quia ipse est super omnia. Item nullo temporum vel intervallo vel spatio, incommutabili aeternitate et antiquior est omnibus, quia ipse est ante omnia, et novior omnibus, quia idem ipse post omnia."



tion, which began in and with time; He antecedes them, so as to be eternal.<sup>60</sup> "He never was not, nor will He ever not be, who never was otherwise, nor ever will be otherwise"; for He always *is*.<sup>61</sup>

These metaphysical differences between created spiritual substances and created material entities on the one hand and the supreme Spirit on the other lie in the background of the explanations made by St. Augustine on the mode of the presence of God and the modes of the presence of creatures. In a more pronounced manner he falls back on this metaphysical foundation when he wishes to contrast especially the difference between purely spiritual beings, such as the soul and angels, on the one hand, and God on the other. While the Bishop aims at practical purposes with the good of the soul predominating in his mind, he is able to plumb the depths of philosophy when the occasion demands and to unfold, as much as is necessary, the very metaphysics of being.

In the statements of St. Augustine, as well as in those of the earlier Fathers, that God is not contained by the universe but that He is in it and at the same time exceeds it, we can easily recognize the distinction that the modern theologian makes between the omnipresence of God and, what is nowadays called, the immensity of God. Both terms refer to the character of God's presence. The former—that is, the divine omnipresence—is relative to, and consequent upon, the created universe and the created individual objects in it. In short, God is present only to the things that exist. He is omnipresent because He is present to everything and to every part of any one thing without exception. If things did not exist, God would not be present to them; yet He would possess immensity. This latter attribute is that perfection of God whereby He would be made indivisibly present to all realities as soon as they exist, without, of course, any local accession to them.

The immensity of God is, therefore, an absolute attribute or perfection, bound up with the infinite essence of God and proper to Him even if no universe or created object were called into being. Thus, for example, before creation God possessed the attri-

<sup>60</sup> Cf. C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), pp. 28 f.

<sup>61</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1077): "[Deus] qui numquam non fuerit, numquam non erit, numquam aliter fuerit, numquam aliter erit."

bute of immensity but not of omnipresence. God became present to the created objects at the moment of their inception.<sup>62</sup> Although the term "immensity," which occurs in St. Augustine's doctrine on God, does not have this specific meaning in reference to God's presence, the doctrine as distinguished above is his.

It is to be observed that St. Augustine, speaking of the divine, ubiquitous presence, usually refers to it simply as God's presence; whereas in the case of that special presence which he designates as the presence of inhabitation in the soul of the just man, he speaks of the presence of the Holy Ghost. Omnipresence in the universe is therefore associated with God; inhabitation in the mystical body of Christ and in each individual holy man is associated with the Holy Ghost. The Bishop of Hippo is rather consistent in these associations and terms. Yet, when occasion demands, he takes the opportunity of explaining more precisely the terms in both cases—that of omnipresence and that of inhabitation—and he affirms that all three Persons are equally and indivisibly involved in each of the two types of divine presences.

Thus, for example, in his letter on the *Presence of God* to Dardanus, St. Augustine asserts categorically and emphatically that the omnipresence of God should not be limited to any one divine Person, but that it is equally proper to all three Persons; viz., the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The like is true of the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost. The Father and the Son are inseparable from the Holy Spirit in every sanctifying indwelling. If the name of the Holy Ghost is singled out in the presence of inhabitation, it is because of the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son. His relation again is dependent upon His procession. While the Son proceeds from the Father as the Word from the intellect, the Holy Ghost proceeds by way of the will from the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Father and the Son; <sup>63</sup> He is said to be their bond of charity.<sup>64</sup> Thus

<sup>62</sup> Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Dieu, son existence et sa nature* (4e éd.; Paris: 1924), p. 386; W. J. Brosnan, *God Infinite and Reason* (New York: 1928), p. 124; L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae* (3rd ed.; Oeniponte: 1940), II, 35; A. Ferland, *Commentarius in Summum D. Thomae, De Deo Uno et Trino* (Montréal: 1943), p. 151.

<sup>63</sup> *De Trinit.*, VIII, procem. 1 (PL 42, 947).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 2, 6 (938); XV, 17, 29 (1081); VI, 5, 7 (927-28); VII, 2, 6 (938).

functions of love and sanctification which are rooted in the will are associated with Him who proceeds from the will. Consequently indwelling in the soul of the just, which is a work of sanctification, is "appropriated" to the Holy Ghost.<sup>65</sup>

These assertions are further founded upon Augustine's doctrine of the Holy Trinity, treated most eruditely and at length in his *De Trinitate*,<sup>66</sup> which was written before the treatise on the *Presence of God*. The epitome of his teaching on the Holy Trinity may be stated thus: There are three really distinct divine Persons who have in common one and the same substance, essence, or nature.<sup>67</sup> And thus, wherever one Person is present in whatsoever manner the whole essence, the whole divinity is indivisibly present, and therefore the other two Persons are equally present.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, the presence of God in creation as well as in the soul of the just belongs to the category of active or operative presence, as shall be shown later; but every operation external to God is common to all three divine Persons.<sup>69</sup>

These explanations on the *ubique totus* presence of God, which are crystallized in great part in his treatise on the *Presence of God*,

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The scholastic theologians, leaning on St. Augustine's doctrine contained in these expressions, developed the explicit doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost as being a procession from the will in contradistinction to the generation of the Word through the intellect. St. Thomas is very explicit in *Contra Gen.*, 4, 19. Cf. A. D'Alès, *De Deo Trino* (Paris: 1936), p. 184.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. F. Cavallera, "La doctrine de saint Augustin sur le Saint Esprit a propos du 'De Trinitate,'" *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, II (1930), 365-76; III (1931), 5-19.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster i. W.: 1927); E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin* (3e éd.; Paris: 1949), pp. 279-92; V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom*, pp. 203-23.

<sup>67</sup> *De Trinit.*, V, 5, 6 (PL 42, 914).

<sup>68</sup> *De doct. Christ.*, I, 5, 5 (PL 34, 21).

<sup>69</sup> *In lo. Ev. tr.* 20, 3 (PL 35, 1558); *In lo. Ev. tr.* 95, 1 (PL 35, 1871); *Ep.* 11, 2 (PL 33, 65; CSEL 4 ed. A. Goldbacher, I, 26); *Ep.* 164, 6, 17 (PL 33, 716; CSEL 44, III, 537); *Ep.* 169, 2, 6 (PL 33, 745; CSEL 44 ed. A. Goldbacher, III, 616); *Ep.* 194, 3, 12 (PL 33, 879; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 186); *Sermo* 52, 3, 4 (PL 38, 356); *Sermo* 71, 16, 26 (PL 38, 459); *Enchir.*, 38, 12 (PL 40, 251; *De conjug. adul.*, 18, 21 (PL 40, 463); *De Trinit.*, I, 6, 12 (PL 42, 827); *De Trinit.*, V, 13, 14 (PL 42, 920); *Contra serm Arian.*, 15 (PL 42, 694). *De Trinit.*, I, 4, 7 (PL 42, 824): ". . . Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus, sicut inseparabiles sunt, ita inseparabiliter operantur. Haec et mea fides est, quando haec est catholica fides."

belong to a period of high maturity of St. Augustine's theological mind (for the treatise was written in 418). It is to be noted, too, that the treatise is a study and explicit presentation of the doctrine in what we may call an approximation to a theological and systematic form. Yet, in a work written by the Saint much earlier (about 400), namely, in his *Confessions*, a history of his soul, he was in full possession of all the points of the doctrine expressed in the treatise on God's presence. In the *Confessions* he does not treat of the doctrine *ex professo*, as he does in the treatise on the *Presence of God*, but the doctrine underlies the prayerful outpourings of his soul. At the very outset of his work the Saint gives vent to the deep consciousness of God's all-pervading presence, for he confesses the firm hold that this doctrine had upon him. The profusions of his soul do not merely reveal a profound religious sentiment but also express a firm and deep theological doctrine.

The main points to be noted in the said passage of the *Confessions* are the following: 1. God is everywhere all-present; already at this early state Augustine uses the terminology *ubique totus* to designate the characteristics of this mode of presence. 2. God is altogether present in heaven and on earth, yes, even present in hell, present in all objects that fill the earth—and present in the same manner in the very being of St. Augustine himself. 3. It comes as an afterthought to the Saint that there is no need to entreat God now to come from heaven into him, for He is already there by that presence by which He fills all things. 4. In fact, God's presence is so imperative, so essential to created beings that they absolutely cannot exist unless God is ever present in them. 5. And yet the universe, heaven, earth, man—the totality of all creatures—cannot comprehend, contain God wholly. By implication, there is a difference between the manner of presence of the infinite God and of finite creatures; and by implication, too, the strict presence of God is differentiated from His immensity. 6. More than this, there is no need on the part of God to be contained by any created object. The need to be sustained and contained, i.e., to have God's presence, lies on the part of creatures.

The pertinent passage of the *Confessions* on the presence of God and its relation to creatures is as follows:

And how shall I call upon my God, my Lord and God? because that when I invoke Him, I call Him into myself. And what place is there



within me, whither can God come into me? Whither can God come into me, God who made heaven and earth? Is it so, my Lord God? Is there anything in me which can contain Thee? Nay, can both heaven and earth, which Thou hast made and in which Thou has made me, in any wise contain Thee? Or else because whatsoever is, could not subsist without Thee, must it follow thereupon that whatsoever hath being, is endued with a capacity of Thee? Since, therefore, I also am, how do I entreat Thee to come into me, who could not be, unless Thou wert first in me? For I am not after all in hell, and yet Thou art there: For if I go down into hell, Thou art there also (Ps. 13:28). I should therefore not be, O God, yea I should have no being at all, unless Thou wert in me: or rather, I should not be, unless I had my being in Thee; of whom, and through whom, and in whom are all things (Rom. 11:36). Even so it is, Lord, even so. Wherefore, then, do I invoke Thee, seeing I am already in Thee? Or whence canst Thou come into me? For whither shall I go, beyond heaven and earth, that from thence my God may come unto me, who hath said, "The heaven and earth do I fill?" (Jer. 23:24).

Do, therefore, the heaven and earth contain Thee, seeing Thou fillest them? or dost Thou fill them, and there yet remains an overplus of Thee, because they are not able to comprehend Thee? If so, into what dost Thou pour whatsoever remaineth of Thee after heaven and earth are filled? Is it not that Thou hast no need to be contained by something, Thou who containest all things; seeing that what Thou fillest, by containing them Thou fillest? For those vessels which are full of Thee, add no stability to Thee; for were they broken, Thou art not shed out: and when Thou art shed upon us Thou art not spilt, but Thou raisest us up; nor art Thou scattered, but Thou gatherest us up; but Thou who fillest all, with Thy whole self dost Thou fill them all. Or because these things cannot contain all of Thee, do they receive a part of Thee; and do all at once receive the same part of Thee? or, several capacities, several parts; and greater things, greater parts; and less, lesser? Is, therefore, one part of Thee greater, or another lesser? Or art Thou all everywhere, and nothing contains Thee wholly? <sup>70</sup>

#### THE MYSTERIOUSNESS OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE

The Fathers admitted that the innermost nature of God's manner of presence in the universe is not easy to explain.<sup>71</sup> St. Augustine expresses himself in like manner. He explicitly states that while

<sup>70</sup> *Confess.*, I, 2-3 (PL 32, 661-62; ed. M. Skutella, 2-3).

<sup>71</sup> For example, St. John Chrysostom, *On the incomprehensible nature of God*, 1, 3 (PG 48, 704).

God is present, most present (*praesentissime*) to the whole universe and to every part of every created object, He is also present *secretissime*<sup>72</sup>—a term that designates the inscrutable mysteriousness of an action or state.<sup>73</sup> Or, asserts St. Augustine, nothing is more mysterious than God, yet nothing is more present; and while it is difficult to say where He is, it is still more difficult to say where He is not.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, the Bishop also explicitly states that God is present in a wonderful way, which, however, is scarcely comprehensible to the mind of man.<sup>75</sup> The roots of this hidden and obscure presence are planted in the very spirituality of His essence, and consequently are remote from the perceptions and cognitive processes of man. The divine substance is ineffable; we cannot express ourselves intelligibly about it and its properties unless we employ language indicative of time and place, even though God is not in place and out of the range of time.<sup>76</sup>

The key to a genuine conception of God's presence is, as was already seen, an orthodox conception of the spirituality of God. God has a spirituality all His own. While the spiritual nature of God is in some respects similar to that of the soul, it is unlike it in other respects. And it is precisely by virtue of this particular spirituality of God that He cannot be but altogether in the whole universe and altogether in every part of the universe at the same time.<sup>77</sup> This kind of divine presence following the divine spirituality is characterized by absolute immutability and indivisibility and, hence, by the totality of presence.

An example of these characteristics of God's mode of ubiquitous presence is the peculiar presence of His whereby He abides in the

<sup>72</sup> *Confess.*, VI, 3, 4 (PL 32, 721; ed. M. Skutella, 103); *De quantitate animae*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1077).

<sup>73</sup> E.g., *De dono pers.*, 13, 33 (PL 45, 1012).

<sup>74</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1077): "quo creatore nihil sit secretius, nihil praesentius; qui difficile invenitur ubi sit, difficilior ubi non sit; . . ."

<sup>75</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 81, 2 (PL 37, 1047): "Non quidem facile est hoc eliquare; quia non corporalem, sed spiritualement Dei praesentiam, quae congruit ejus substantiae, negari non potest adesse conditis rebus, mirabili videlicet et vix paucis intelligibili modo."

<sup>76</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha I, 159): "quamvis, inquam, illa substantia ineffabilis sit, nec dici utcunque homini per hominem possit, nisi usurpatis quibusdam locorum ac temporum verbis, cum sit ante omnia tempora et ante omnes locos; . . ."

<sup>77</sup> *Sermo* 277, 13, 13 (PL 38, 1264-65).

souls of men. The soul of each just individual possesses God in such a manner that God in His totality is said to inhabit that soul as a temple. Yet all men who are just constitute at the same time but one body, the mystical body of Christ, one temple, one spiritual whole, inhabited corporately by the same God. This one God is not greater in all in whom He dwells than He is in a single inhabited individual.<sup>78</sup> He is most perfectly spiritual, simple, all-encompassing, all-pervading, indivisible, wholly in each inhabited soul, and wholly in the entire mystical body of Christ.

The difficulty of the subject on the one hand and the ingenuity and the practical cast of mind of St. Augustine on the other led him to find practical examples with which to bring home to the human mind, as far as possible, the omnipresence of God. Augustine likens the ubiquitous and total presence of God to the indivisibility of the quality of immortality. Immortality is incorporeal; it permeates altogether as one virtue the whole of the human body, while that same body is corporeal and divisible. Thus while some members of the body are larger than others, they are not by the same token more immortal than others are.<sup>79</sup> And, again, he parallels it to health, which indivisibly permeates the body and its component members. Thus, in a wholly healthy body a smaller member, for example, a finger, has not less health than a bigger member, e.g., the hand.<sup>80</sup>

The African Doctor distinguishes, therefore, between the mode of presence which is proper to quantity and that proper to quality.<sup>81</sup> He categorically excludes dimensive quantity from God. Nor does He put God into the category of quality. The nature of a quality merely serves him as an analogy to illustrate, and as a

<sup>78</sup> *De civ. Dei*, X, 3 (PL 41, 280; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 405).

<sup>79</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 12 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 90): "Ipsa denique immortalitas corporis . . . non est profecto mole magna sed, licet corporaliter habeatur, incorporea quadam excellentia, nam cum ipsum immortale corpus minus sit in parte quam in toto, immortalitas ejus tam plena est in parte quam in toto et, cum sint aliis alia majora, non tamen aliis alia immortaliora sunt membra. . . ."

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*: ". . . quando omni ex parte sani sumus secundum modum praesentis in corpore sanitatis, non, quia major est manus tota quam digitus, ideo manus totius sanitatem majorem dicimus esse quam digiti."

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 13 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 91): "corpus aliqua substantia, quantitas ejus est in magnitudine molis ejus, sanitas vero ejus non quantitas sed qualitas ejus est."

confirmative argument to prove, the possibility of God's ubiquitous diffusion. "Far be it," he says, "that whatever the quality of a created body can do in a body, the substance of a creator cannot do in itself."<sup>82</sup> He also compares the presence of God to wisdom in man, which is so present that it is not measured by the size of the body of its possessor;<sup>83</sup> or if there are two equally wise men of whom one is greater in size, wisdom will not be greater in the one on that account than it is in the smaller one.

Such abstract substantives as justice, truth, wisdom, chastity, and others became for Augustine stock terms to illustrate, and proofs to demonstrate, the possibility of that presence which is proper to God. He uses these terms not only in his more recondite treatises but also in his works, especially sermons, intended for the instruction of the people. In some sermons there is ample evidence of spontaneity and extemporization. If in such sermons St. Augustine employs these abstract concepts to elucidate the nature of God's presence, it is patent that they constitute a well thought out part of his theology. Thus in a sermon *On Jacob and Esau*, delivered on the feast of the martyr Vincent, Augustine states that God is not a corporeal being nor any which the imagination can form. In the course of this sermon follows a spontaneous and extemporized passage, as is evident from the choppy and short sentences in the form of interrogations.<sup>84</sup>

Let us try to think, brethren, how the light of truth, the light of wisdom are everywhere present to all: let us try to think how the light of justice is present to every thinking being. What is it that he thinks? Who wants to live unjustly, sins. He abandons justice; is it diminished? He is converted to justice: is it increased? He abandons it but leaves it whole: he is converted to it, but finds it whole. What is, therefore, the light of justice? Does it arise in the east and proceed to the west? Or

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 13 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57, IV, 92): "Absit ergo, ut, quod potest in corpore qualitas creati corporis, non possit in se ipsa substantia creatoris."

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 11 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 90): "sicuti est magna sapientia etiam in homine, cujus corpus est parvum, et, si duo sint sapientes, quorum sit alter corpore grandior neuter sapientior, non est illa in majore major, minor in minore aut minor in uno quam duobus, sed tanta in hoc quanta in illo et tanta in unoquoque quanta in utroque."

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Roy J. Deferrari, "St. Augustine's Method of Composing and Delivering Sermons," *The American Journal of Philology*, XLIII, 3 (1922), 193-194.



is there another place whence it arises and whither it goes? Is it not available everywhere? If a man who is in the west desires to live justly, that is according to justice, will it be wanting for him to see according to justice? Likewise situated in the east, if he wants to live justly, that is according to the same justice, will it be wanting to Him? For justice is there: it is available for the one living justly. . . . It is not in any place, it is everywhere: such is justice, such wisdom, such truth, such chastity. Try to see such a light.<sup>85</sup>

The examples of abstract qualities, by which the great Doctor of the Church illustrates this profound subject of God's omnipresence, are analogies by which he intends to render intelligible to the human mind the whole and indivisible presence of God on the one hand and at the same time the universally diffusive character of the divine presence on the other. He does not intend to imply by the use of such analogies that God is such a quality, for he expressly denies that God is a pervasive quality of the world.<sup>86</sup> He thus consistently steers clear of any taint of pantheism. God does not constitute a part of the being or essence of creatures, although His presence in them is a *conditio sine qua non* of their existence. Speaking of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the chaotic mass described after the first act of creation in the opening lines of Genesis,<sup>87</sup> Augustine asserts that we must not imagine, as some do, the Holy Person therein described as animating by His very person this newly created mass.<sup>88</sup>

In opposition to the predicament of quality, the great Doctor maintains that God is the creative and personal substance which is directly responsible for the existence of all beings, material and spiritual. By an act of His will God called all beings, material and spiritual, into existence; He continues directly to sustain them in their being; it is He, too, who rules and guides the created universe.<sup>89</sup> Augustine identifies or correlates the presence of God in the universe with these divine operations concerning that same

<sup>85</sup> *Sermo* 4, 6, 7 (PL 38, 36).

<sup>86</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 14 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57, IV, 92): "sic est Deus per cuncta diffusus, ut non sit qualitas mundi."

<sup>87</sup> *Gen.* 1:2.

<sup>88</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 1, 5 (PL 40, 133).

<sup>89</sup> *Ep.* 187, 4, 14 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57, IV, 92): "sic est Deus . . . substantia creatrix mundi sine labore regens et sine onere continens mundum."

universe. "God fills the earth," says the Bishop, "not by the exigency of His nature, but by the presence of His power."<sup>90</sup> For the presence of God is inseparable from the creative act causing the existence of the universe and of the objects contained in it, but it is also necessarily consequent upon that act. As things cannot commence to be without the creative power and act of God, so neither can they continue to be without God's abidance in them, again through His sustaining operations.

Augustine's exegesis of the hexaemeron and the repose that God takes on the seventh day brings out by contrast the fullness of his doctrine on the divine presence. "God rested," he explains, "after the six biblical days of creation in so far as He did not create any new genera of beings."<sup>91</sup> He does not rest, however, from all activity in and concerning the universe which originated through an act of creation. In other words, God does not create anything new after the creation described in Genesis, but He never ceases to operate in the things He has created.<sup>92</sup> Nor does St. Augustine see in this ceaseless activity any contradiction to the immutability of God. God is always simultaneously at rest and at work,<sup>93</sup> for He is in Himself above and beyond time and place, although He works in all things confined to time and place.<sup>94</sup>

St. Augustine insists on the necessity and correlation of both the creative and conservative factor in regard to the universe. The universe cannot come into existence unless it is created by the only necessary Being, God; nor can it continue to be in existence unless it is sustained by the only self-subsisting Being, God. The exercise of the power of conservation is more closely and emphatically associated with the presence of God in the universe than the creative act. The omnipresent God of St. Augustine, therefore, is not only

<sup>90</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313): "implens coelum et terram praesente potentia, non indigente natura."

<sup>91</sup> Cf. *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 108).

<sup>92</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 23, 46 (PL 34, 338; CSEL 28, I, 169); *ibid.*, V, 4, 10 (PL 34, 325; CSEL 28, I, 144).

<sup>93</sup> *Op. cit.*, V, 23, 46 (PL 34, 338; CSEL 28, I, 169): "simul et requiescens et operans."

<sup>94</sup> *Op. cit.*, VIII, 23, 44 (PL 34, 389; CSEL 28, I, 262): "Verum quia omnino incommutabilis est illa natura Trinitatis . . . ipsa apud seipsam et in seipsa sine ullo tempore ac loco, movet tamen per tempus et locum sibi subditam creaturam. . . ."

the omnipotent God who creates all things out of nothing but also the all-holding God who preserves the things that He has created.<sup>95</sup> Both of these divine actions are demonstrative to what extent creatures are dependent in their being and existence upon God and His omnipresence.

This fuller sense of the presence of God casts further light upon the Augustinian phrase "to contain" (*continere*), viz., that God contains the universe but is not contained in it. It was stated earlier that this expression was used by Christian tradition to deny that the Christian God was to be envisaged in the manner of the existence of created beings, be they corporeal or immaterial. It was shown that these need a substrate, space, place in which they can exist either circumscriptively or definitively. Pagan deities were thus conceived as contained in the universe and as occupying place. As has already been pointed out, God is not present in this wise, but rather God's immensity serves as a substrate, the necessary condition for the existence of all things. They are said to be in God. The expression "to contain" is also used in this sense by Augustine, but more frequently does it denote or connote a sustaining action or a conserving operation on the part of God. Thus in a characteristic passage which deals with inhabitation, rather than general omnipresence, he clearly brings out this meaning:

We dwell in a house otherwise than God in His saints; you dwell in an abode; if it is taken away you fall; God, however, dwells in His saints in such a manner that if He withdraws, they fall. Whosoever, therefore, bears God in such a way as to be His temple, let him not think that God is borne by him in a way as to intimidate God if he should withdraw. Woe to him if God should withdraw (from him), for he shall fall: since God always remains in Himself. The things that we dwell in contain us; whatever God inhabits, He contains it.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>95</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48, (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 265): "Deus omnipotens et omnitenens, . . . ;" *ibid.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108): "Creatoris namque potentia, et omnipotentis atque omnitenentis virtus, . . ." The epithet "*omnitenens*" has not passed down into tradition and systematic theology as a technical term to describe the divine attributes.

<sup>96</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 122, 4 (PL 37, 1633): "Aliter enim nos habitamus in domo, aliter Deus in sanctis: tu habitas in domo; si subtracta fuerit, cadis; Deus autem sic habitat in sanctis, ut si ipse discesserit, cadant. Quicumque ergo sic portat Deum, ut sit templum Dei; non putet sic a se portari Deum, ut terreat Deum, si se subducatur. Vae illi si se subtraxerit Deus; quia ipse cadit: nam Deus

The Bishop of Hippo says that after the act of creation God does not cease to contain (*continere*) and govern (*gubernare*) all that He created.<sup>97</sup> The containing of St. Augustine is linked with the operative power of God, through which the universe and all things constituting it continue to be in existence. In other words, the dependence of the contingent universe upon God is evident not only from the creation but also from the maintenance of it in existence; whereas God, in contrast to the contingent universe, is the necessary Being and cause. Practically the same truth is expressed when the Bishop asserts that the created universe is in God rather than God in the universe or in place;<sup>98</sup> or when he states simply that no being can be without Him.<sup>99</sup> While he makes God contain the world through His penetrating power, Augustine is quick to point out that God is utterly transcendent to the material universe.<sup>100</sup>

This activity on the part of God, therefore, expressed in the phrase "to contain the world" is bound up, in the philosophy of the Saint, with the divine omnipresence. The words of St. Leo, expressive simultaneously of the "containing" power of God and of the divine omnipresence, may be quoted as an apt interpretation of St. Augustine's doctrine when the former, speaking of God, says: "at the same time filling all things whilst containing them."<sup>101</sup> With even more directness St. Cyril of Alexandria expresses these same notions concerning God's presence when he says that God

in se semper manet. In quibus nos habitamus, ipsa nos continent; in quibus Deus habitat, ipse illos continet."

<sup>97</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108): "Proinde et quod Dominus ait, 'Pater meus usque modo operatur,' continuationem quandam operis ejus, qua universam creaturam continet atque administrat, ostendit." Cf. *Ep.* 187, 4, 14 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57 ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 92).

<sup>98</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, 83, 1, 20 (PL 40, 15).

<sup>99</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 34, 77 (PL 32, 1077): "cum quo esse non omnes possunt, et sine quo esse nemo potest."

<sup>100</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265): ". . . cum ergo tale aliquid Deus agit, non debemus opinari ejus substantiam qua Deus est, temporibus locisque mutabilem, aut per tempora et loca mobilem . . . non in illo opere quo naturas creat, sed in illo quo intrinsecus creatas extrinsecus administrat, cum sit ipse, nullo locorum vel intervallo vel spatio, incommutabili excellentique potentia et interior omni re, quia in ipso sunt omnia, et exterior omni re, quia ipse est super omnia."

<sup>101</sup> St. Leo, *Sermo* LXXVI, 3 (PL 54, 405): "simul implens omnia, simul continens omnia."



contains all things and fills them with His power. The Greek Father continues: "The divine hand embraces every place and every creature, containing and preserving in their being created things and infusing life to those beings which are devoid of life and inserting intellectual life [into beings] capable of intelligence." <sup>102</sup>

According to St. Augustine, God cannot recede from the work which He has brought into existence, as does the artisan. When the latter completes his work, he goes away, since the structure or artifact no longer needs him for its continuance in existence. If God were to withdraw from the created universe or abandon any of the multitudinous created beings which constitute it, the universe or any separate being from which the power of God would be withdrawn would turn to nothingness.<sup>103</sup> His omnipotent and all-sustaining power is the cause of the subsistence of all creation. Hence it is that God, in St. Augustine as well as in patristic theology,<sup>104</sup> is represented metaphorically somewhat in the manner of humans as upholding and sustaining the universe in existence. St. Augustine says:

For the power of the Creator, and the virtue of the omnipotent and all-holding [God] is the cause of subsistence of every creature; if this virtue should sometime cease from upholding (*regendis*) those things which are created, their species would cease and all creation would fall to nothingness (*concideret*). Nor is it as with the builder of structures [who] leaves when they are finished, and his work stands when he has ceased and departed; not so with the universe [which] would not even stand for the twinkling of the eye if God should withdraw His support (*regimen*) from it.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup> St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Gospel of St. John*, I, 9 (PG 73, 130).

<sup>103</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108); *ibid.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 109); *ibid.*, V, 20, 40 (PL 34, 335; CSEL 28, I, 164).

<sup>104</sup> For example, St. Hilary, *De Trinit.*, I, 6 (PL 10, 29): "Universitas coeli palma Dei tenetur, et universitas terrae pugillo concluditur." St. Gregory, *Moral.*, 16, 37 (PL 75, 1143). For the images used by the Fathers to express the notion of conservation, cf. D. Petavius, *De Deo Deique proprietatibus*, 8, 2 (ed. Fournials, I [1865], 631 f.); L. Lessius, *De perf. div.*, 10, 3, 25 (ed. Paris.: 1881, p. 130).

<sup>105</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, ed. J. Zycha, I, 108): "Creatoris namque potentia, et omnipotentis atque omnitenentis virtus, causa subsistendi est omnis creaturae; quae virtus ab eis quae creata sunt regendis, si aliquando cessaret, simul et illorum cessaret species, omnisque natura conci-

St. Augustine, therefore, does not conceive the presence of God in terms of an inert and otiose abidance, or restive pervasion through all being, or a musing over creation, but in the form of an active and operative inbeing. To use more modern terminology, the divine presence is not static, but dynamic. Conceiving God's presence as a dynamic inbeing in the universe is common not only to the tradition of the Greek and Latin Fathers, as has been pointed out when their doctrine was taken into account at the outset, but also to the non-christian philosophy of the times. Thus Plotinus considers the presence and immensity of God pre-eminently in the form of power.<sup>106</sup>

The "One," however, is found neither in other things, nor in the divisible, nor is it indivisible in the sense in which the smallest possible remainder is indivisible. It is the greatest of all things, not in extension, but in power, and hence space and extension have nothing to do with its power. The real existences which come next to it in rank are also indivisible and undivided in a dynamic, not a spatial, sense. We are to understand, too, that it is infinite, not by virtue of being immeasurable in extension or number, but because its power cannot be comprehended or circumscribed.

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deret. Neque enim sicut structor aedium cum fabricaverit, abscedit, atque illo cessante atque abscedente, stat opus ejus, ita mundus, vel ictu oculi stare poterit, si ei Deus regimen sui subtraxerit." Also *Confess.*, VII, 15, 21 (PL 32, 744; ed. M. Skutella, 144). Cf. also St. Thomas, *Sent.*, I, d. 37, q. 1, a. 1 in c., where he makes use of the same example.

<sup>106</sup> *Enneads*, VI, 9 (Volkman, II, 515). Translated by B. A. G. Fuller in C. M. Bakewell, *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy* (New York: 1907), p. 368.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE DYNAMIC PRESENCE OF GOD: OPERATIVE INBEING

**S**T. AUGUSTINE explicitly distinguished between two divine operations: the one intrinsic, the other extrinsic.<sup>1</sup> The intrinsic activity of God consists in the divine creative act by virtue of which all creatures—the whole universe, all the individual beings that constitute it, time and space—begin to exist. The extrinsic activity of God includes a variety of divine operations which are necessary to keep in existence all that was created. Evidently the terms “intrinsic” and “extrinsic” are relative. God is conceived, in the fashion of man, as working from within (if that were possible) on something that is to exist for the first time. Now that the object exists, He is conceived as being active, again according to the manner of men, on the outside of the object by sustaining it, co-operating with its actions, moving, and directing it. The intrinsic and extrinsic actions are not unrelated; the external action is described by St. Augustine as a “certain continuation” of the intrinsic, creative operation.<sup>2</sup>

Upon closer inspection it will be evident that all the divine actions included under intrinsic and extrinsic operations are in fact intrinsic to the object acted upon. Strictly speaking, the operations of God who works from within, differ from those of man, who works from without and upon something that pre-exists. God as a

<sup>1</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265, lines 7–8): “. . . naturas, quas intrinsecus substituit, etiam extrinsecus administret. . . .”; lines 16–17: “. . . quo intrinsecus creatas etiam extrinsecus administrat. . . .”; cf. also *Confess.*, VII, 1, 2 (PL 32, 733; ed. Skutella, 125).

<sup>2</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108): “Proinde et quod Dominus ait: ‘Pater meus usque modo operatur,’ continuationem quandam operis ejus, qua universam creaturam continet atque administrat, ostendit.”

creating and conserving Spirit operates internally in the very essence of an object and attains the very inward being of a thing. Thus, the divine influx operating in nature is, strictly and theologically speaking, intrinsic. That this is the philosophy of St. Augustine on the nature of divine activity in the universe will become clear from a further analysis of those operations which he terms extrinsic. It must be observed that the extrinsic activity of God does not form a single operation, so far as the effects are concerned, but a complexus of operations, some of which are, comparatively speaking, more extrinsic than others.

St. Augustine himself undoes, at least in part, his own division of divine actions in the universe into intrinsic and extrinsic when he includes in the intrinsic category an action which he previously classified as extrinsic. He is explicit in stating that for the universe simply to be (*ut omnino natura sit*) God must provide the necessary action in an immaterial way, and that intrinsically. Now, this divine action whereby creatures simply are must be resolved not only into the creative act but also into the conservative act. In corroboration of the need of both of these actions the Fathers and St. Augustine adduce the words of St. Paul: "for of Him, and by Him, and in Him, are all things."<sup>3</sup> He further asserts that in all the beings individually constituting the universe God must likewise be active intrinsically and immaterially if they are to have existence (*ut natura sint*). But if it is a matter not of their very existence, but of their development, betterment and beauty, then God's action is termed external and "corporeal," for it presupposes and involves setting in motion other corporeal beings to promote such conditions.<sup>4</sup>

The dynamic presence of God is presented by St. Augustine both as intrinsic and extrinsic. The beings created by God are entirely dependent upon God for their existence. To maintain them

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 11:36.

<sup>4</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 25, 46 (PL 34, 390; CSEL 28, I, 263): "Natura igitur universitatis corporalis non adjuvatur extrinsecus corporaliter, neque enim est extra eam ullum corpus; alioquin non est universitas. Intrinsicus autem adjuvatur incorporaliter Deo id agente, ut omnino natura sit, 'quoniam ex ipso et per ipsum et in ipso sunt omnia,' partes vero ejusdem universitatis et intrinsicus incorporaliter adjuvantur, vel potius fiunt, ut naturae sint, et extrinsecus corporaliter, quo se melius habeant, sicut alimentis, agricultura, medicina et quaecunque etiam ad ornatum fiunt, ut non solum salvae ac fecundiores, verum etiam decentiores sint."



in existence God must attain their very innermost essence. The penetration of the divine influx into its very being is certainly intrinsic. The Bishop designates it as such. On the other hand, in order not to identify God in any way with the universe in which He operates, He is said to be exterior to it.<sup>5</sup> There is, therefore, a certain relativity in the application of the terms "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" to the divine activity in the universe.

### INTRINSIC OPERATION

St. Augustine says that God is present in all things, fills and contains them because God is active in the universe and in each entity by a certain mysterious power (*occulta potentia*),<sup>6</sup> and by a certain mysterious motion (*occulta inspiratione*).<sup>7</sup> This latter divine action refers to the order of nature, but the terms *inspiratio* and *inspirare* are employed by St. Augustine<sup>8</sup> and the African Church writers<sup>9</sup> likewise, for the operations of God relative to the will of man in the order of grace. This divine action in the sphere of nature—the more so in the order of super-nature—must be conceived as being intrinsic to the created entity, by virtue of which operation the entity subsists. As a result of this operation God must be said to be immanent to the object in which He is operative, but not in the sense that He thereby becomes a part of it or that He is one in being with it.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, Augustine is careful to point out that the divine power which is operative in created objects, keeping them in existence and motion, does not despoil those same creatures of the inherent acts and motions proper to their own being.<sup>11</sup>

This ordinary and necessary operation of God, with which the

<sup>5</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265).

<sup>6</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 40 (PL 34, 335; CSEL 28, ed. J. Zycha, I, 164).

<sup>7</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 1, 2 (PL 32, 733; ed. M. Skutella, 125): "*occulta inspiratione intrinsecus. . .*"

<sup>8</sup> *Ep.* 194, IV, 16 (PL 33, 880; CSEL 57, ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 188): "*Sed ita dictum est 'interpellat,' quia interpellare nos facit, nobisque interpellandi et gemendi inspirat affectum.*"

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Tertull., *De patientia*, 1 (PL 32, 1249; CSEL 37, ed. A. Kroymann, III, 1): "*gratia divinae inspirationis*;" St. Cyprian, *Ad Fortunat.*, praef. 1 (CSEL 3, ed. G. Hartel, I, 317): "*auxilio divinae inspirationis.*"

<sup>10</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313): "*Quamvis enim nihil esse possint sine ipso, non sunt quod ipse.*"

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*: "*Sic itaque administrat omnia quae creavit, ut etiam ipsa proprios exercere et agere motus sinat.*"

divine presence in the universe is inextricably bound up, is to be distinguished from that presence which, in relation to the aforementioned action of God, must be considered as extraordinary. This type of divine operation is manifested in miracles.<sup>12</sup> Here, too, God is operative in the universe, but in such a manner as to manifest intentionally to men the operation as His own by an extraordinary interposition in the laws of nature. From the visible miraculous effect one concludes to His operations and presence. "All who wonder at such events,—what do they say? I saw God present."<sup>13</sup>

The doctrine of St. Augustine stands in opposition to both types of Deism: first, to the extreme type, which taught that the Creator after positing the act of creation no longer assists or interferes with the universe, which now of itself has the mechanics to survive and to operate;<sup>14</sup> secondly, to the less rigorous type, which maintained that God, although solicitous about the universe, could not interfere with its natural course by any extraordinary interposition, as for example, by miracles.<sup>15</sup>

St. Augustine illustrates the ordinary operative mode of the

<sup>12</sup> Cf. P. de Vooght, "La notion philosophique du miracle chez Augustin," *Rech. de théol. ancienne et médiévale*, X (1938), 317-43; *id.*, "Les miracles dans la vie de saint Augustin," *Rech. de théol. ancienne et médiévale*, XI (1939), 5-16; *id.*, "La théologie du miracle selon saint Augustin," *Rech. de théol. ancienne et médiévale*, XI (1939), 197-222.

<sup>13</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 43, 4 (PL 36, 484): "Et illuminatio vultus tui; quid est hoc? Quia talibus signis eis affuisti, ut praesens intelligeretur. Numquid enim quando nobis Deus aliquo miraculo adest, faciem ipsius oculis nostris videmus? Sed effectum miraculi suam praesentiam insinuat hominibus. Denique omnes qui mirantur ad hujusmodi facta, quid dicunt? Vidi Deum praesentem. 'Sed dextera tua, et brachium tuum, et illuminatio vultus tui: quoniam complacuisti in eis;' hoc est, sic cum eis egisti, ut bene placeres in eis, ut quisquis eos attenderet quomodo cum eis ageretur, diceret quia vere Deus est cum illis, et Deus illos agit."

<sup>14</sup> T. Christlieb, *Modern Doubt and Christian Belief* (4th ed.; Edinburgh: 1789), p. 101: "[God] exists only above the world as a personal spirit, who, after creating the world of His will, now acts toward it like an artificer with a finished machine, which mechanically pursues its natural course according to the laws laid down for it, and no longer requires the immediate assistance or interference of its maker. . . . The being, personality, and supramundane nature of the Deity, and the creation of the world by Him are thus acknowledged; while, on the other hand, any continuous active presence of God in the world, and any living interposition in its affairs are denied."

<sup>15</sup> J. Ward, *The realm of ends, or Pluralism and Theism* (Cambridge: 1912), pp. 260 f.: "What they [English Deists of the 18th century] denied was not the divine immanence *in toto*, but only occasionalistic interferences as mira-

divine presence by concrete examples. God is not present in this world as the sun, the moon, and the stars are present. They are created objects, dependent for their existence upon the will of a creating agent. By the very fact that they are created they are dependent for their subsistence on their cause. Nor is God in the world as the artisan is present to the object which he makes, for the craftsman must be not only anterior but also external to what he is making and later to the finished product. Moreover, to express it in the fashion and phraseology of Augustine, the human artisan occupies a place separate and different from that occupied by the thing made. Man is present to the object that he fashions but is not present in it. On the contrary, God is not only present to the universe which He calls into being through a creative act, but He is also immanent in it; nay, He is intrinsic to each part and parcel of the universe. The whole and undivided God pervades the whole universe; the whole and undivided God is present in each part and every particle of it. His presence is the cause of subsistence of all things; it guides and rules them. "By the presence of His majesty He creates whatever He creates; by His presence He rules whatever He has created."<sup>16</sup>

Some of the terms which St. Augustine employs to express this internal operation in the universe are those that are common to our modern usage, as, for instance, *operatio*,<sup>17</sup> *potentia*,<sup>18</sup> and

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cles, special revelation, and special providence imply." Cf. also J. W. Riley, *American Philosophy: The Early Schools* (New York: 1907), pp. 191 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 2, 10 (PL 35, 1393): "In mundo erat, et mundus per ipsum factus est." Ne putes quia sic erat in mundo, quomodo in mundo est terra, in mundo est coelum, in mundo est sol, luna et stellae, in mundo arbores, pecora, homines. Non sic in mundo erat. Sed quomodo erat? Quomodo artifex, regens quod fecit. Non enim sic fecit, quomodo facit faber. Forinsecus est arca quam facit, et illa in alio loco posita est, cum fabricatur; et quamvis juxta sit, ipse alio loco sedet qui fabricat, et extrinsecus est ad illud quod fabricat; Deus autem mundo infusus fabricat, ubique positus fabricat, et non recedit aliquo, non extrinsecus quasi versat molem quam fabricat. Praesentia majestatis facit quod facit; praesentia sua gubernat quod fecit. Sic ergo erat in mundo, quomodo per quem mundus factus est."

<sup>17</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 40 (PL 34, 335; CSEL 28, I, 163); *Confess.*, VII, 15, 21 (PL 32, 744; ed. M. Skutella, 144): "quia tu Domine, qui solus aeternus es, non post innumerabilia spatia temporum coepisti operari, quia omnia spatia temporum, et quae praeterierunt et quae praeteribunt, nec abirent nec venirent nisi te operante et manente."

<sup>18</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 40 (PL 34, 335; CSEL 28, I, 164, line 20); *ibid.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108, line 15).

*virtus*,<sup>19</sup> *motus*.<sup>20</sup> He makes use of other terms, however, which are now ordinarily employed to designate an activity external to the object it is exercised upon. Such are, for instance, *regimen*,<sup>21</sup> *regere*,<sup>22</sup> *gubernare*,<sup>23</sup> *administrare*.<sup>24</sup> It is thus evident that the terminology which was used in conducting the affairs of a state or a society has been appropriated by St. Augustine for the operations of God whereby He sustains and governs the universe after its creation. These activities in the case of God belong, at least predominantly, within the sphere of what St. Augustine considers to be intrinsic operations.

#### EXTRINSIC OPERATION

There is the divine operation which in some sense may be termed external; it applies to the relation of creatures to one another. This action of God takes place in the form of a providential care whereby God guides, rules, and destines the whole of creation and its infinitely multiple constituents to an orderly purpose.<sup>25</sup> St. Augustine voices his disagreement with those who maintain that the universe above, starting with the finer and purer air and encompassing the stars, moon, and all the upper regions is the domain of God's providence, whereas the lower, terrestrial and aquatic portion, surrounded by winds, clouds, and vapors lies outside the providence of God. Not only the whole universe as such but also the minutest and most abject particles in it are subject to God's care and guidance.<sup>26</sup> It is this type of divine effective solici-

<sup>19</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108).

<sup>20</sup> *Loc cit.*, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 109); V, 20, 41 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 164).

<sup>21</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 2, 10 (PL 35, 1393); *De civ. Dei*, XII, 5 (PL 41, 353; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 518); *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 111).

<sup>24</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 41 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 164); *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313).

<sup>25</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 5 (PL 41, 353; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 518): "Naturae omnes . . . in eum divina providentia tendentes exitum, quem ratio gubernandae universitatis includit."

<sup>26</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 21, 42 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 165): "Nec omnino audiendi sunt qui putaverunt sublimes quidem mundi partes, id est a confinio corpulentioris aeris hujus et supra, divina providentia gubernari; hanc autem imam partem terrenam et humidam, aerisque hujus vicinioris qui terrarum et



tude that St. Augustine has especially in mind when he speaks of God taking care of creatures in a paternal manner by feeding, protecting, seeking, perfecting.<sup>27</sup> In St. Augustine's works these divine operations also fall under the same nomenclature that is employed for the conservation of things in their existence; viz., *regere, gubernare, administrare*.

To summarize and at the same time clarify, St. Augustine divides the dynamic presence of God into that which is the creative act (intrinsic operation) and that which is the administrative act (extrinsic operation). Under the phraseology "administration of creation" St. Augustine includes a wide range of divine actions. These actions of God are diverse when viewed from their diverse effects and when considered from the standpoint of man, although when viewed from their source as emanating from God they are the one, the same and undivided act of God. *Administrare* in this capacity is promiscuously interchanged with *gubernare* and *regere*, or is used jointly with them.<sup>28</sup> All these terms, therefore, designate what Augustine calls an extrinsic operation of God: "the creatures which He has intrinsically constituted, He administers extrinsically."<sup>29</sup>

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aquarum exhalationibus humescit, in quo venti nubesque consurgunt, casibus potius et fortuitis motibus agitari. . . . Quid autem? ore suo Salvator, cum dicit unum passerem non cadere in terram sine Dei voluntate (Mt. X: 29) et quod faenum agri post paululum mittendum in clibanum, ipse tamen vestiat (Mt. VI: 30); nonne confirmat non solum totam istam mundi partem rebus mortalibus et corruptibilibus deputatam, verum etiam vilissimas ejus abjectissimasque particulas divina providentia regi?"

<sup>27</sup> *Confess.*, I, 4, 4 (PL 32, 662; ed. M. Skutella, 3): "semper agens, semper quietus; colligens, et non egens; portans, et implens, et protegens; creans, et nutriendus, et perficiens; quaerens, cum nihil desit tibi."

<sup>28</sup> Cf., for instance, *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 23, 44 (PL 34, 390; CSEL 28, I, 262, lines 17-18): "regens atque administrans universam creaturam"; *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 23, 46 (PL 34, 338; CSEL 28, I, 169, lines 14-15); "administratorio actu gubernans et movens, sine cessatione operatur." It will be observed that all three: *administrare, gubernare, and regere* are employed in the same sentence. *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108, line 12, 14 and 22), where again the same substantives and verbs are used in separate sentences developing the same thought and designating the same action. *In lo. Ev. tr.* 2, 10 (PL 35, 1393): "... regens quod fecit. . . . praesentia sua gubernat quod fecit." "Sermones" (Mai) in *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (ed. G. Morin; Rome: 1930), I, 360: "Ecce quae fecit, gubernat et continet. . . ."

<sup>29</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265): "... naturas quas intrinsecus substituit, etiam extrinsecus administret."

This administration of creation (*administratio creaturae*)<sup>30</sup> by God extends itself to the whole of the created universe and, consequently, embraces all rational and irrational creatures.<sup>31</sup> To it belongs the conservation of beings which were created. Just as a creature cannot be its own cause in coming into existence, so it is not by its own virtue that it subsists.<sup>32</sup> Augustine states that "if He should withdraw this activity from creatures, we would not live, nor be moved, nor be."<sup>33</sup> And in another passage, "if He should withdraw His, what I would call, architectural action from things, they would not be, just as they were not before they became."<sup>34</sup> This is the operation of God which Augustine distinguishes at times from the whole complex of administrative operations by separating it from the others and bringing it to the foreground.

The divine power of preserving creation is very frequently expressed in St. Augustine's writings by the verb "to contain" (*continere*). He says that God contains and administers, contains and rules, contains and governs.<sup>35</sup> In these Augustinian dicta, the operation of "containing" refers to the all-important act of sustaining and maintaining in existence; the other terms synonymously used by St. Augustine when he speaks of the universe, refer to the other remaining operations of God in moving and guiding creation in His providential solicitude. This divine activity of sustaining the universe is as proper to God as creation itself, and is a continuation of the creative act.

The doctrine of the conservation of the universe is one that is accentuated in the writings of St. Augustine and well developed in his theology and cosmology. Augustine, however, did not use any special word that would serve as a technical term to designate

<sup>30</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 31 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 314).

<sup>31</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 23, 44 (PL 34, 389; CSEL 28, I, 262).

<sup>32</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108, lines 16-17): "Creatoris namque potentia et omnipotentis atque omnitenentis virtus causa subsistendi est omni creaturae."

<sup>33</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 110).

<sup>34</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 25 (PL 41, 375): "Si potentiam suam, ut ita dicam, fabricatoriam rebus subtrahat, ita non erunt, sicut ante quam fierent non fuerunt?"

<sup>35</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 110, line 5): "continere et gubernare;" *ibid.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 108, lines 24-25): "qua universam creaturam continet atque administrat, . . .;" *ibid.*, II, 6, 11 (PL 34, 268; CSEL 28, I, 41): "quia reget et continet ea."

this divine action. The examples used by the Bishop of Hippo to illustrate the conserving power of God will be found in the Fathers and scholastic writers. The word *conservare* occurs in Petrus Lombardus,<sup>36</sup> was used generally by the writers of the golden period of Scholasticism,<sup>37</sup> and became universally accepted to designate the power of God whereby He sustains the universe and each particle of it. It is noteworthy, too, that the Scholastics of this period<sup>38</sup> appeal in their doctrine on conservation of the universe, to St. Gregory the Great, who was a popularizer of St. Augustine's doctrine, instead of to St. Augustine himself.<sup>39</sup>

Within the sphere of the Augustinian *administratio* is found the action of God whereby new creatures are brought into existence to take their appointed place in the universe. In commenting on the passage of Genesis which, after having described the six days

<sup>36</sup> *Sent.*, I. I, d. 38, 7 (PL 192, 623): "Nam et ipsa loca, et quidquid in eis est, nisi ipse conservet, manere non possunt."

<sup>37</sup> E.g., St. Bonaventure, *In II sent.*, d. 37, a. 1, q. II (Ad Claras Aquas [Quaracchi], 1885, II, 864); St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 104, a. 1 and 2.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, *loc. cit.*: "Dependet enim esse cujuslibet creaturae a Deo, ita quod nec ad momentum subsistere possent, sed in nihilum redigerentur, nisi operatione divinae virtutis conservarentur in esse, sicut Gregorius dicit." St. Bonaventure, *loc. cit.*: "quod sic videtur per Gregorium: 'cuncta in nihilum cederent, nisi manu conditoris ea contineret.'" The quotation is not exact, but is a slight recast of St. Gregory's words making them approximate more to the terminology of St. Augustine, whose writings St. Bonaventure knew so well.

<sup>39</sup> The passage which caught the attention of the Scholastics is the following in St. Gregory's *Moralia*, 16, 37, 45 (PL 75, 1143): "Aliud est esse, aliud principaliter esse; aliud mutabiliter, atque aliud immutabiliter esse. Sunt enim haec omnia, sed principaliter non sunt, quia in semetipsis minime subsistunt, et nisi gubernantis manu teneantur, esse nequaquam possunt. Cuncta namque in illo subsistunt, a quo creata sunt. . . . Cuncta quippe ex nihilo facta sunt, eorumque essentia rursum ad nihilum tenderet, nisi eam auctor omnium regiminis manu retineret." In the same article in which he quotes St. Gregory, St. Thomas also directly refers to the words of St. Augustine; Ia, q. 104, a. 1: "Sic autem se habet omnis creatura ad Deum, sicut aer ad solem illuminantem. Sicut enim sol est lucens per suam naturam; aer autem fit luminosus participando lumen a sole, non tamen participando naturam solis; ita solus Deus est ens per essentiam suam, quia ejus essentia est suum esse; omnis autem creatura est ens participative, non quod sua essentia sit ejus esse. Et ideo Augustinus dicit, 4 super Gen. ad litt., cap. 12, circa princ.: 'Virtus Dei ab eis quae creata sunt regendis si cessaret aliquando, simul et illorum cessaret species, omnisque natura consideret'; et in 8 ejusdem lib., cap. 12, circa med., dicit quod 'sicut aer praesente lumine fit lucidus, sic homo Deo sibi praesente illuminatur, absente autem continuo tenebratur.'"

of creation, speaks of the repose of God on the seventh, St. Augustine states that God did not create on that day a new "nature" (*natura*),<sup>40</sup> or new genera of creatures,<sup>41</sup> but that He incessantly works to this day by calling into being and life the individual existences of the generic essences which were created in the six days of the hexaemeron. St. Augustine clearly distinguishes, therefore, between the creative act of the first *genera* and the administrative act for the inception, in the time and place determined by God, of new individual beings pertaining to those *genera*.<sup>42</sup> The Bishop is emphatic in stating that it was not sufficient for God to create the world and let it develop itself while He abstained from all activity, but that He is actively engaged in its maintenance, development, and progress.<sup>43</sup>

In his work *De Praesentia Dei* St. Augustine succinctly touches upon the intrinsic and extrinsic activity of God in the universe, when he makes this assertion: "God is in this manner . . . the creating substance of the world ruling it without labor and containing it without burden (*sic est Deus . . . substantia creatrix mundi sine labore regens et sine onere continens mundum*)."<sup>44</sup>

1. God, therefore, is the Creator. As is evident from all that has been heretofore said, the creative act is conceived by St. Augustine

<sup>40</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 110); *Ep.* 205, 3, 17 (PL 33, 948; CSEL 57, IV, 337-38).

<sup>41</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 108).

<sup>42</sup> *Ep.* 205, 3, 17 (PL 33, 948; CSEL 57, IV, 337-38): "Quomodo enim negare poterimus Deum etiam nunc operari cuncta, quae creantur, cum Dominus dicat: Pater meus usque nunc operatur? Unde illa cessatio septimi diei ab ipsis naturis condendis intelligenda est facta, non ab earum administratione, quae conditae referuntur. Cum ergo natura rerum a creatore administratur et per ordines praefinitis locis et temporibus suis cuncta nascuntur, Deus usque nunc operatur. Nam si Deus nunc ista non format, quo modo legitur: Priusquam te formarem in utero, novi te? Quomodo etiam accipi potest: Quod si faenum agri . . . Deus sic vestit? nisi forte credendum est faenum a Deo vestire et a Deo corpora non formari, cum enim dixit 'vestit,' non de praeterita ordinatione sed de praesenti operatione satis indicat . . . ut creatorem intelligas efficaciam sapientiae suae rebus, quae cotidie suis temporibus oriuntur, condendis adhibere."

<sup>43</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 40 (PL 34, 335; CSEL 28, I, 164): "Jam nunc ergo discernamus opera Dei, quae nunc usque operatur, ab illis operibus a quibus in die septimo requievit. Sunt enim qui arbitrentur tantummodo mundum ipsum factum a Deo, caetera jam fieri ab ipso mundo, sicut ille ordinavit ac jussit."

<sup>44</sup> *Ep.* 187, IV, 14 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57, ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 92).



as being the intimate, intrinsic, and mysterious presence of God from which the universe took its beginning. To use his own words: "whose uncontaminated presence, penetrating all things by a hidden power, causes to be whatever in any way is, inasmuch as it is; because unless he caused it, it would not only not be this or that, but it could in no wise be."<sup>45</sup> 2. He is the administrator and ruler of the created universe: notwithstanding the immensity and complexity of the whole universe, He does this without any effort or labor (*sine labore regens*). 3. He is the sustainer of all things created by an immanent action; "containing the universe" is to be understood not only in the sense of the whole world, but also of individual creatures constituting the whole universe. In the passage at hand St. Augustine distinguishes in the divine operation that element which is, as it were, more intrinsic and affects the very essence of a being, and that element which is rather external to the being, determining, as it were, its course.

It must be noted that the creative and the conserving acts of God—as well as all other divine operations which belong to the administration of the created universe—are inseparably bound up in the mind of St. Augustine with the omnipresence of God. St. Augustine conceives of God not as present and therefore as acting, but as operative and therefore as present. "These things," affirms Augustine, "the one true God works and performs as God, that is, as being present everywhere."<sup>46</sup> And elsewhere he asserts: "Behold what He created, He governs and contains; He Himself who created fills by His presence those things which He created."<sup>47</sup> The acts of governance and preservation exercised on all creation are associated in some manner with the divine presence which pervades all creation.

The sentence: *a quo sumus, per quem sumus, in quo sumus*,<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 25 (PL 41, 375): "cujus (Dei) occulta potentia cuncta penetrans incontaminabili praesentia facit esse quidquid aliquo modo est, in quantumcumque est, quia nisi faciente illo, non tale vel tale esset, sed prorsus esse non posset."

<sup>46</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313): "Haec autem facit atque agit unus verus Deus, id est ubique totus, . . ."

<sup>47</sup> "Sermones" (Mai), 126, 6 *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (ed. G. Morin; Rome: 1930), I, 360: "Ecce quae fecit, gubernat et continet; ille ipse, qui fecit, implet sua praesentia ista quae fecit."

<sup>48</sup> *De vera relig.*, 55, 113 (PL 34, 172).

a re-echo of St. Paul,<sup>49</sup> which has been adapted by St. Augustine to his doctrine on the presence of God, is to be interpreted in the light of the preceding explanations. Namely, God who is most excellent and transcendental can have all things proceed from Him only through creation "out of nothing" (*a quo sumus*); because created things are limited they continue to have their being through Him: He continues to lend them a sustaining virtue (*per quem sumus*); and thus the universe and all created individual beings on account of this complete dependence on God are said to be in Him (*in quo sumus*).

This biblical text dealing with the divine activity in the universe must be interpreted in the light of many other scriptural passages and can be expressed in concise philosophico-theological terminology in the following manner: 1. of Him (*ex ipso*) . . . are all things: God is the efficient cause of creation; 2. by Him (*per ipsum*) . . . are all things: God is, first, the exemplary cause of all things because they have been created according to the divine ideas which are identical with His nature or essence. Since the Word is expressive of the divine Wisdom, the *per* is associated with the second Person of the Trinity. The *per ipsum* signifies, secondly, the efficient quasi-instrumental cause, since the Word proceeding from the Father possesses from the Father the same nature and the creative power. 3. in Him, the Vulgate *in ipso*, the Septuaginta *εἰς αὐτὸν* signifies the final cause, or the movement whereby all creation returns to God.

The three prepositions, therefore, do not express distinct activities which would be proper to each divine Person. For they are used in Sacred Scripture in such a manner that the same preposition is associated also with other Persons. Thus *ex* is used not only of the Father, but also of the Son<sup>50</sup> and of the Holy Ghost.<sup>51</sup> The preposition *per* is connected not only with the Son but also with the Father<sup>52</sup> and with the Holy Ghost.<sup>53</sup> The preposition *in* is

<sup>49</sup> Rom. 11:36: "Quoniam ex ipso, et per ipsum, et in ipso sunt omnia"; cf. *Confess.*, 1, 2, 2 (PL 32, 662; ed. M. Skutella, 3); *De vera relig.*, 55, 113 (PL 34, 172); *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 25, 46 (PL 34, 390; CSEL 28, I, 263, line 21).

<sup>50</sup> Eph. 4:16.

<sup>51</sup> John 3:6.

<sup>52</sup> I Cor. 1:9.

<sup>53</sup> I Cor. 12:8.

associated not only with the Holy Ghost but also with the Son.<sup>54</sup> However, by the rule of appropriation, the preposition *ex* is attributed to the Father, as to the principle, *from* whom are all things; *per* is attributed to the Son, because He is the Word or the Wisdom of the Father, *through* Whom are all things; *in* is associated with the Holy Ghost, as to the divine love, in which all things are contained, and by which they are directed to their end.

In regard to God's inbeing in creation, it is worthwhile to observe that a twofold series of assertions which manifest the relation of the universe to God may be gleaned from the writings of St. Augustine. First, God is said in manifold ways, to be in the universe as a whole and in all its component parts individually taken: "God in them." Secondly, the entire universe with each individual part of it is said to be in God: "They in God."<sup>55</sup> Scripture, in the passage just quoted<sup>56</sup> and elsewhere,<sup>57</sup> countenances the latter manner of expressing God's presence in the universe and the relation of the universe to God. The Latin Fathers contemporaneous to St. Augustine express themselves in like manner, although they do not make the effort that the Saint does in order to explain this usage. The expression that all things are in God is found in St. Ambrose<sup>58</sup> and St. Jerome.<sup>59</sup> At a much later date St. Bernard states it trenchantly: "As all things are in Him, so is He in all things."<sup>60</sup> Plotinian philosophy, too, supports it.<sup>61</sup>

While he employs very frequently the variations of the "God-in-all-things" statements, St. Augustine expresses his preference for those assertions which are equivalent to the "all-things-in-God" phraseology.<sup>62</sup> A practical application of this with regard to man himself is found in his *Confessions*: "And how shall I call upon my

<sup>54</sup> Col. 1:15-17.

<sup>55</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 18 (PL 34, 308; CSEL 28, I, 115-16).

<sup>56</sup> Rom. 11:36.

<sup>57</sup> Act. 17:28; Col. 1:16.

<sup>58</sup> St. Ambrosius, *De Fide*, I, 16, 106 (PL 16, 553; ed. Ballerimi, IV, 597).

<sup>59</sup> St. Hieronymus, *In Is.*, 66:2 (PL 24, 653).

<sup>60</sup> St. Bernardus, *De consid.*, V, 6 (PL 182, 769): "sicut omnia in ipso, sic ipse in omnibus."

<sup>61</sup> *Enn.*, IV, 3, 9 [Volkmann, II, 21]: "It [the world] lies in the Soul which sustains it. . . ."

<sup>62</sup> *De div. quaest.*, 20 (PL 40, 15): "in illo sunt potius omnia quam ipse alibi; cf. also *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 18, 32 (PL 34, 308; CSEL 28, I, 115).

God, my God and Lord, since, when I call for Him, I shall be calling Him to myself? and what room is there within me, whither my God can come into Me? Whither can God come into me, God who made heaven and earth? . . . Whither do I call Thee, since I am in Thee?"<sup>63</sup> To state, therefore, that all things are in God is to express the dynamic presence of God in the universe.

St. Augustine warns us, however, that created things are not in God in the manner that the divine attributes or perfections are in God; these are in reality one with Him, they are His very being, they are Himself.<sup>64</sup> Universal creation, therefore, is not in God as a part of His substance, but as a dependent being which must be supported by Him in order to exist and must be directed in its existence to fulfill its purpose within the designs of God.<sup>65</sup> He is the sole uncaused reality and every other caused reality must lean on His power. "He is . . . by His immutable and transcendent power interior to every being, because all things are in Him, and exterior to every being, because He is above all things."<sup>66</sup> St. Augustine even terms this inbeing in God a place (*locus*), thus considering the divine essence as a container of beings, although he excuses himself for using such metaphorical language.<sup>67</sup>

#### MOVEMENT

From the operation of God involved in the conservation of beings it is well to distinguish that activity of God which is effec-

<sup>63</sup> *Confess.*, I, 2, 2, tr. by E. B. Pusey (London: 1945), p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, II, 6, 12 (PL 34, 268; CSEL 28, I, 41); "Aliter ergo in illo [Verbo] sunt ea, quae per illum facta sunt, quia regit et continet ea; aliter autem in illo sunt ea, quae ipse est. Ipse enim vita est, quae ita in illo est, ut ipse sit, quoniam ipse vita est lux hominum."

<sup>65</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 109): "Neque enim tamquam substantia ejus sic in illo sumus. Quemadmodum dictum est, quod habeat vitam in semetipso, sed utique, cum aliud sumus quam ipse, non ob aliud in illo sumus, nisi quia id operatur, et hoc est opus ejus, quo continet omnia et quo ejus sapientia pertendit a fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponit omnia suaviter, per quam dispositionem 'in illo vivimus et movemur et sumus.' Unde conligitur, quod, si hoc opus suum rebus subtraxerit nec vivemus nec movebimur nec erimus."

<sup>66</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265): "cum sit ipse [Deus] . . . incommutabili excellentique potentia et interior omni re, quia in ipso sunt omnia, et exterior omni re, quia ipse est super omnia."

<sup>67</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 18, 34 (PL 34, 309; CSEL 28, I, 117, lines 17-23).



tive of movement in creatures. The effect of the former divine activity is that they simply continue *to be* according to their nature;<sup>68</sup> of the latter, that they *move and act* according to their nature. God not only sustains creation but also lends movement to it. Just as St. Augustine teaches that without divine conservation beings would not subsist, so also he maintains that without lending them such movement they could not exist but would perish.<sup>69</sup> The Aristotelian Boethius, who was also influenced by Augustine, echoes these sentiments when he says that while God remains immobile, He moves all things.<sup>70</sup> This divine action imparting movement to the universe and all creatures is described by Augustine as a continuous and stabilizing activity, yet it is incomparable with any movement that we are acquainted with, and consequently it is ineffable.<sup>71</sup> This action, too, falls within that province which Augustine terms the administration of the universe.<sup>72</sup>

It is due to this movement of God that the original work of creation accomplished in the six days of Genesis further developed and is in continual progress within the limits appointed to it. This divine activity is the cause of the new beings originating in the world and sets all creation in motion. "Through it the Angels fulfill the commands given them, the stars move in their orbits, vegetative and sentient life develops, and the ages which were woven into creation, unfold."<sup>73</sup> In the original created universe there were many potentialities which were to be actualized by this ac-

<sup>68</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 25, 46 (PL 34, 390; CSEL 28, ed. J. Zycha, I, 263, line 20): ". . . Deo id agente ut omnino natura sit."

<sup>69</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 109): ". . . scriptum est, quod motus ejus agilior celeriorque sit omnibus motibus: satis apparet recte intuentibus hunc ipsum incomparabilem et ineffabilem, et si possit intelligi, stabilem motum suum rebus eam praebere suaviter disponendis, quo utique subtracto, si ab hac operatione cessaverit, eas continuo perituras." Cf. also *ibid.*, V, 20, 40 (PL 34, 335; CSEL 28, I, 164, line 20).

<sup>70</sup> Boethius, *Cons. Phil.*, III, 9 (PL 63, 758): "Stabilisque manens, das cuncta moveri."

<sup>71</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28, I, 109).

<sup>72</sup> Cf. *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 312-13; *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 41 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 165, lines 2-3): "quae tamen in suos cursus non explicarentur, si ea ille, qui condidit, provido motu administrare cessaret."

<sup>73</sup> C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), p. 97.

tivity.<sup>74</sup> Because all things are subject to this divine movement there is no room for chance.<sup>75</sup>

Although in the doctrine of St. Augustine on God the conservative act is not really distinct from the motive act, yet from the viewpoint of man below, weighing a single and simple divine act by its diverse effects, these acts are described by St. Augustine as distinct activities of God. As light emanating from a single source is divided as it were into manifold rays, so also the simple act proceeds from a simple nature and attains whatever is attainable in a multitude of effects. In addition, therefore, to the creative act by virtue of which creatures begin to be, and in addition to the conservative act by virtue of which they continue to be, there is also the motive act by which God moves the universe and creatures in it or co-operates with creatures in the effecting of every individual act and single motion.<sup>76</sup>

The operations of God in moving creatures are of a twofold type, according to the intrinsic nature of the creature that is moved and directed. The natural movement is that which is imparted by God to inanimate and irrational creatures; voluntary movement is that whereby the intellect and free will of creatures possessing such noble endowments are moved in accordance with their rational nature.<sup>77</sup> In man both the natural and voluntary powers are in operation: the natural, in this that the body increases and grows old; the voluntary, whereby man exercises his rational powers concerning that same body.<sup>78</sup> St. Augustine reminds us that God lends His moving power to the universe gently. For He does not absorb or deprive creatures of the movements proper to their nature, whether these actions of creatures be classified as natural or voluntary.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 41 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 164-65): ". . . explicat saecula, quae illi cum primum condita est, tamquam plicata indiderat: . . ."

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 21, 42 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 165).

<sup>76</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 20, 41 (PL 34, 336; CSEL 28, I, 164): "mover itaque occulta potentia universam creaturam."

<sup>77</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 9, 17 (PL 34, 379; CSEL 28, I, 244).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* (PL 34, 379; CSEL 28, I, 244-45).

<sup>79</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 220; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313): "Sic itaque administrat omnia quae creavit, ut etiam ipsa proprios exercere et agere motus sinat. Quamvis enim nihil esse possint sine ipso, non sunt quod ipse."

St. Augustine adduces the text of the Acts of the Apostles<sup>80</sup> that we live, are moved, and are in God, to show that creatures are dependent in their being, actions, and movements upon God as their causal, supporting, and moving agent. St. Paul borrowed this passage from the Greek poets<sup>81</sup> and referred it to the true God in his speech to the Athenians at the Areopage.<sup>82</sup> This text of the Acts occurs in the earliest patristic literature to prove the necessity of the divine action or co-operation with the actions and movements of human beings.<sup>83</sup> St. Augustine states that this passage of Sacred Writ corroborates us in our belief that God works without ceasing to this day.<sup>84</sup> The general meaning of the text comprises, in the interpretation of Augustine, both the conservative and the motive powers of God. Although the words of the text are applicable to all creatures, corporeal and spiritual,<sup>85</sup> they are verified pre-eminently in the composite nature of man. In fact, because greater operativeness is necessary on the part of God in relation to human beings, He is said to be nearer to man.<sup>86</sup>

The action of God can be conceived as twofold. He can operate in all things even where intermediary causes are employed by an immediate action, or He can operate through the medium of creatures. In this latter case, God would be the cause of every action of creatures inasmuch as He created the being, gives the power of

<sup>80</sup> XVII, 28.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. E. Jacquier, *Les actes des Apôtres* (2 éd; Paris: 1926), pp. 535-36; M. Pontet, *L'exégèse de S. Augustin prédicateur* (Paris: 1945), p. 324.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. P. Parente, "St. Paul's Address before the Areopagus," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XI (1949), 144 ff.

<sup>83</sup> E.g., St. Ambrose, *De dignitate conditionis humanae*, 2 (PL 17, 1015); St. Hilary, *Tractatus super Psalmos* 118, 19, 8 (PL 9, 629; CSEL 22, ed. A. Zingerle, 526-27); in Ps. 21 (PL 9, 863; CSEL 22, 838). See also Theodoret, *De providentia*, 10 (PG 83, 750).

<sup>84</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 109).

<sup>85</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 18, 32 (PL 34, 308; CSEL 28, I, 115-16); "Neque enim coelum et terra et omnia quae in eis sunt, universa scilicet spiritualis corporalisque creatura in seipsa manet; sed utique in illo de quo dictum est, 'In illo enim vivimus, et movemur, et sumus' (Act. 17:28). Quia etsi unaquaeque pars potest esse in toto cuius pars est; ipsum tamen totum non est nisi in illo a quo conditum est."

<sup>86</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28, I, 159): "propinquior nobis est qui fecit, quam multa quae facta sunt. In illo enim vivimus, et movemur, et sumus (Act. 17:28).

acting to these secondary causes, and inasmuch as He sustains this being and power in existence.<sup>87</sup> This latter way of imparting divine aid is termed mediate action. From what has been heretofore said it is patent that St. Augustine has presented a well developed theology of the mediate divine operation in his doctrine of the creation and preservation of the universe.

The question now is whether all that has been said in reference to the divine activity, operation, and influx in the universe can be interpreted of a direct or immediate action. It was maintained until recently by philosophers as well as theologians that the teaching of the immediacy of the divine operations in moving creatures has been unanimous and uninterrupted down through the centuries in patristic and scholastic writings.<sup>88</sup> While it is evident that the Fathers attribute the movements of the universe and the motions and actions of creatures to a divine causality it is not equally evident that God, according to their teaching, is operative by an immediate action. At least in many instances it can easily be ascertained that the passages of the Fathers which are alluded to as being an evidence of such divine operations do not deal with the immediacy of action but are sufficiently explainable by divine conservation.<sup>89</sup> It is likewise obvious that many passages in St. Augustine are to be interpreted in the light of the doctrine of conservation.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>87</sup> St. Thomas, *De pot.*, 3, 7: *Quaest. Disp.*, I, 61; cf. J. B. Manya, *Theologumena*, I, *De Deo Operante* (Barcelona: 1946), pp. 44 ff.

<sup>88</sup> Such, for instance, is the contention of L. Teixidor, "Del concursu immediato de Dios en todas las acciones de las criaturas," *Estud. eccl.*, VII (1928), 5-23; VIII (1929), 332-62; IX (1930), 321-50; XI (1932), 190-227; 289-322).

<sup>89</sup> For example, St. Jerome, *Dial. adv. Pelagianos*, I, 3 (PL 23, 500); in which Critobulus, a Manichaean adversary queries: "Si in singulis rebus, quas gerimus, Dei utendum est adiutorio, ergo et calamus temperare ad scribendum et temperatum sumice terrere, manumque aptare litteris, tacere, loqui, sedere, stare, ambulare, currere, comedere, jejunare, flere, ridere, et cetera hujusmodi, nisi Deus juverit, non poterimus?" The Catholic Atticus responds: "Juxta meum sensum non posse perspicuum est." St. Jerome speaks of indifferent acts which are rendered salutary by a good intention, and are thus conducive to eternal life.

<sup>90</sup> For instance, *Ep.* 205, 3, 17 (PL 33, 948; CSEL 57, ed. A. Goldbacher, 337-38): "Quod autem quaeris, utrum singillatim a creatore Deo corporum lineamenta formentur, non te movebit, si, quantum potest humana mens, potentiam divinae operationis intelligas. Quo modo enim negare poterimus Deum etiam nunc operari cuncta, quae creantur, cum Dominus dicat: 'Pater



However the tenor of many patristic texts relating to divine operation in the universe, individual creatures, and man seems to point in the direction of an immediate divine action affecting the being and movements of created substances. The Fathers have not coined an exact terminology and phraseology and have consequently not formulated their doctrine of divine concursus with scientific exactness. The frequency of allusion to God's activity in the capacity of prime Mover of the universe and individual beings seems to indicate an operation on the part of God which is directly instrumental in bringing about the effect caused by the creature. Obviously, in the works of the Fathers, the action of the primary Cause is related to the action of the secondary cause by some bond of causality. What is said of the Fathers in general is true of St. Augustine. Some of his statements, if taken according to their obvious meaning, can at least be interpreted in the sense of an immediate action upon the movements or actions of creatures.

A good indication that the Fathers lacked definiteness and precision in their teaching on the immediacy of divine concursus is their negative influence, as far as this doctrine is concerned, upon the whole period preceding the golden age of Scholasticism. Bishop A. Landgraf, a former professor of theology at the Catholic University of America and well versed in the theology of this period, has pointed out, in many articles written in various periodicals, that there is no explicit mention of the doctrine of immediate divine concursus in the whole period from the eighth to the twelfth century. And yet this was the period<sup>91</sup> of positive theology when writers leaned heavily on the teaching of the Fathers and used tradition as their supreme rule and guide. For these and the following centuries St. Augustine was by far the dominant Father and the most influential theologian.<sup>92</sup>

meus usque nunc operatur?' Unde illa cessatio septimi diei ab ipsis naturis condendis intelligenda est facta, non ab earum administratione, quae conditae referuntur. Cum ergo natura rerum a creatore administratur et per ordines praefinitis locis et temporibus suis cuncta nascuntur, Deus usque nunc operatur. . . . Multum est autem vel tenuiter sapere, quo modo commutabilia et temporalia non commutabilibus et temporalibus creatoris motibus sed aeterna et stabili virtute condantur."

<sup>91</sup> For this period, cf. M. Grabmann, *Geschichte der katholischen Theologie* (Freiburg: 1933), pp. 25-46.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. W. Schulz, *Der Einfluss Augustins in der Theologie und Christologie*

A further question may be posited with regard to the nature of divine immediate operation, viz., whether the causality of the prime Mover precedes the causality of the secondary cause by giving the physical impulse, or whether both the prime Mover and the secondary cause are co-efficient of the effect in the sense that they co-operate simultaneously. This is the famous historical problem which, especially in reference to the will of man, developed to its full stature in the sixteenth century in the controversies between D. Banez (d. 1604) and L. Molina (d. 1600) and their respective followers. In this matter no support for either side can be gained from the writings of St. Augustine. His teaching in the matter at hand is too general and somewhat vague, and consequently can have no influence on determining this intricate question of a more developed theology concerning the immediacy of divine concursus.

From what has been said it is clear that creation, conservation, and concursus are divine actions concerning the universe. Conservation and concursus can be classified, properly speaking, as the administration of the universe. It is to be noted, however, that the term "administration" is not exclusively reserved by Augustine to this sphere of action,<sup>93</sup> nor, within this sphere of action, to the operations of God alone. For angels, too, are said to "administer" in this world,<sup>94</sup> and this angelic action pertains, at least in part, to those operations which St. Augustine has designated as extrinsic.<sup>95</sup> While the creative power is absolutely God's, and while the administrative operations are ascribed to God, nevertheless the latter are also imputed in some way to created spiritual substances. These are called by St. Augustine: *spiritus*, *spiritus Dei*, *spiritus vitae*, *rectores-spiritus*.

The work of angelic administration not only includes beauty and motion necessary for the development of beings, but also seems

*des VIII and IX Jahrhundert* (Halle: 1913). The author shows the influence of St. Augustine's teaching on creation and conservation, for example on p. 65, but omits any mention of the doctrine of divine co-operation.

<sup>93</sup> For example, *Enar. 2 in Ps.*, 61, 8 (PL 36, 735): "ut quidam pertinentes ad civitatem Babyloniam administrent res pertinentes ad Jerusalem; et rursum quidam pertinentes ad Jerusalem, administrent res pertinentes ad Babyloniam."

<sup>94</sup> *Retract.*, 1, 10, 4 (PL 32, 602; CSEL 36, 55-56): "quae virtus in angelis sanctis ad decorandum atque administrandum mundum Deo servit. . . ."

<sup>95</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 25, 46 (PL 34, 390; CSEL 28, I, 264-65).

to involve the preservation of beings in existence. For the term *continere*, which is associated with God so frequently and with the Person of the Holy Ghost,<sup>96</sup> is also asserted of angels, viz., that they "contain" and move this visible universe and all material entities in it.<sup>97</sup> And yet St. Augustine sets a limit to the operations of angels in the universe when he designates them as extrinsic in contrast to the intrinsic action of God.<sup>98</sup> It seems, therefore, that they have a share, in some limited and dependent capacity, in the administration of the universe by being allowed to participate in those divine powers necessary to preserve creatures in the universe and to activate them; but these actions compared with God's are described as extrinsic to those creatures.

### ORDER

Besides sustaining creatures in existence and lending them movement, God also is the cause of all order in creation. The order of nature (*ordo naturae*)<sup>99</sup> is related in the mind of St. Augustine with the hexaemeron, especially with the event of the seventh day: God's rest on that day is symbolic, if not causative, of the repose which is reflected in the order of nature. After the creative work described in each of the six biblical days, God is said to have abstained from any further creation and to have rested on the seventh day. Yet, St. Augustine argues, it always remains true that God works and rests at the same time. While He is engaged in administering the universe and is thereby active, He enjoys eternal peace and undisturbed tranquility.<sup>100</sup> His perfect blessedness is not in the possession and fruition of anything outside of Himself, but lies in the possession and fruition of that good which He Himself is,

<sup>96</sup> St. Hieronymus, *Ep.* 98, 13 (PL 22, 801; CSEL 55, 197): "quo abibo a spiritu tuo? quod dicens ostendit sancto spiritu omnia contineri et illius maiestate circumdari."

<sup>97</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imp.*, IV, 17 (PL 34, 226; CSEL 28, I, 469).

<sup>98</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 25, 47 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 264-65): "Quod autem attinet ad creaturæ angelicæ actionem, per quam universarum rerum generibus maximeque humano providentia Dei perspicitur, ipsa extrinsecus adjuvat et per illa visa, quæ similia sint corporalibus, et per ipsa corpora, quæ angelicæ subjacent potestati."

<sup>99</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 24, 45 (PL 34, 390; CSEL 28, I, 263, line 4).

<sup>100</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 13, 24 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 111): "qui [Deus] simul et operatur, et quiescit, et creaturæ præbens congruam gubernationem, et apud se habens æternam tranquillitatem."

"since He has the eternal and immutable blessedness and rather *is* the eternal, immutable blessedness." <sup>101</sup>

The creation of the universe, therefore, cannot be an end whereby God would attain some advantage, benefice, or enrichment. The term *goodness* is predicated of God rightly and in the highest sense. To be good, spoken of man, denotes an outpouring of the one who is good, and not an intaking: all emanates from such a one, as from a source, and does not converge toward him as to an end. In the Supreme Being, both proceeding from and returning to are of necessity true: all things proceed from Him by creation on account of His goodness, but they all also return to Him and His goodness as their ultimate end on account of His perfection. "Because God is good," states St. Augustine, "we are." <sup>102</sup> "Whatever was created, He made, not by any necessity nor by any need for His own use, but by His goodness alone." <sup>103</sup>

God is necessary not only for the permanence of creation, as has already been seen, but also for its stability, peace, and tranquillity. For He not only preserves "nature" (to use an Augustinian term) but also causes order, which is so necessary and conspicuous in nature; and precisely in this order lies its harmony, peace, and tranquillity. Order is found in every realm of being, the material and spiritual. Moreover, order is identified with peace. In all things peace is the tranquillity of order. <sup>104</sup> "Nature" and order, therefore, are considered by St. Augustine as being in separate categories, and as causing correspondingly distinct activities of God in the universe. Just as universal creation is said to be "in God" because He preserves it, so is order said to be "in God" because it is an object of His action and is founded in that peace and tranquillity which

<sup>101</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 9, 18 (PL 34, 302; CSEL 28, I, 105, lines 15-16); *ibid.*, IV, 18, 34 (PL 34, 309; CSEL 28, I, 116-17): "ne temporale aliquod bonum illi aeternitati et incommutabilitati accidisse vanitate temeraria suspicemur—sed illam quidem requiem Dei, qua in se ipso requiescit eoque bono beatus est, quod ipse sibi est. . . ."

<sup>102</sup> *De doctr. christiana*, I, 1, 32 (PL 34, 32): "Quia enim bonus est sumus."

<sup>103</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 24 (PL 41, 338): "In eo vero quod dicitur: 'Videt Deus omnia bonum est,' satis significatur Deum nulla necessitate, nulla suae cujusquam utilitatis indigentia, sed sola bonitate fecisse quod factum est, id est, quia bonum est."

<sup>104</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XIX, 13, 1 (PL 40, 640); cf. E. Chapman, *St. Augustine's Philosophy of Beauty* (New York: 1939), p. 40.



are His.<sup>105</sup> The perfection of any creature does not lie in the place it holds in the universe, of which it is a part, but in the place it holds in Him from whom that creature and the universe proceed. Creatures have their particular place and stability in the essence of God which contains ideal exemplars of all created beings and where all designing has taken place. These designs and beings are realized in creation so that a marvelous order arises in the universe as such and in the multitude of beings reciprocally to one another.<sup>106</sup>

In Augustine's three exegetical works on Genesis repeated and laborious efforts are made to arrive at a literal and exhaustive interpretation of the first book of the Bible.<sup>107</sup> In these treatises are Augustine's "profound speculations on the created works of God which had been for so many years revolving in his mind, and which he set down in writing with so much caution and after so much delay."<sup>108</sup> His profound and enthusiastic interest in nature was due to the fact that it came from God, in it God continued to work, in it He was mirrored, and through it one was led to a knowledge of the Creator. Beauty, symmetry, and order in nature were reflections of the eternal beauty of God Himself.

We Catholics worship God, the principle of all good, great or little, the principle of all beauty, great or little, the principle of all order, great or little. The more measure, beauty, and order shine out in the created things the more are they good; the less the shining out of measure, beauty, and order the less are they good. Measure, beauty,

<sup>105</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 18, 34 (PL 34, 309; CSEL 28, I, 117, lines 8-16): "Ac per hoc ipsa universitas creaturae, quae sex diebus consummata est, aliud habet in sua natura, aliud in ordine, quo in Deo est, non sicut Deus, sed tamen ita, ut ei quies propriae stabilitatis non sit nisi in illius quiete, qui nihil praeter se appetit, quo adepto requiescat. Et ideo, dum ipse manet in se, quidquid ex illo est retorquet ad se, ut omnis creatura in se habeat naturae suae terminum, quo non sit, quod ipse est, in illo autem quietis locum, quo servet, quod ipsa est."

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, (lines 5-8): "quoniam rei cujusque perfectio non tam in universo, cujus pars est, quam in eo, a quo est, in quo et ipsum universum est, pro sui generis modulo stabilitur, ut quiescat, id est, ut sui momenti ordinem teneat."

<sup>107</sup> *De Genesi adversus Manichaeos* was written in 389; *De Genesi ad litteram*, *opus imperfectum*, was composed about 393; *De Genesi ad litteram*, *libri duodecim*, was begun after Augustine had commenced his work *De Trinitate* and was finished before completing the last mentioned work on which he was engaged from about 400 to 416. Cf. *Retract.*, II, 24, 1 (CSEL 26 ed. Knöll, 159).

<sup>108</sup> H. Pope, *Saint Augustine of Hippo* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 228.

and order are three general goods that we find in all created things whether spiritual or corporeal. God infinitely surpasses every creature in measure, beauty, and order from whom flows all measure, beauty, and order. Where these are present in a high degree, there good is in the same proportion, and similarly good is mediocre where they are present in a weak degree, if completely absent so too is the good. Where these three are great, the natures are great; where weak, so too the natures, and if completely absent there will be no nature since every nature is good.<sup>109</sup>

Following in the footsteps of the Fathers, St. Augustine associates the various divine activities discussed in this chapter with the divine omnipresence. In other words, when Augustine contemplates God as creating, or thinks of Him as sustaining, or conceives of Him as lending motion and co-operating with the acts of man, or sees God as the author of order, the Bishop ties these activities of God with His presence either by way of association or of identification.<sup>110</sup> When the presence of God in the universe, as it is presented to us by Augustine, is analyzed, it will be discovered that the divine activity or the dynamic presence is uppermost in his mind. "He is," says the Saint, "by His immutable and transcendent power interior to everything."<sup>111</sup>

His treatise *On the Presence of God* bears ample evidence to the fact that St. Augustine considered the presence of God predominantly as a dynamic presence.<sup>112</sup> The occasion of this disquisition was a misconception by Dardanus and others of the way Christ is present. Christ as God is everywhere present; but it does not follow, Augustine contends, that Christ's humanity is everywhere present. He solves the difficulty by pointing to the existence of a twofold nature in Christ: the divine, which is everywhere, and the human, which is circumscribed in space. Augustine explains this by way of comparison. As the operative inbeing of God in man according to what is said in the Acts<sup>113</sup> does not make man everywhere present, so likewise because the divinity of God dwells

<sup>109</sup> *De natura boni*, 3 (PL 42, 553).

<sup>110</sup> *In Io. Ev.* tr. 2, 10 (PL 35, 1393): ". . . regens quod fecit . . . praesentia sua gubernat quod fecit." *De civ. Dei*, XII, 25 (PL 41, 365).

<sup>111</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265).

<sup>112</sup> *Ep.* 187, 3, 10 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, ed. A. Goldbacher, IV, 89).

<sup>113</sup> XVII, 28.

in the humanity of Christ, it does not follow that His humanity is everywhere as the divine nature is.<sup>114</sup>

Related specifically to man, St. Augustine's doctrine contains a twofold operation of God within man. One type of divine action is that which is common to all creatures and without which man cannot subsist, move, or act. This activity of God belongs to the order of nature. It follows as a necessity upon the creative act and is a certain continuation of it, for it would be futile to create man unless he, like all other creatures, would be maintained in existence by the continuous conservation of God, and be moved to his proper acts and destiny by an ever-accompanying concursus of the divine power. But there is still another and higher activity of God relative to man. It pertains to the order of supernature to which man alone of all terrestrial creatures has been destined. St. Augustine views the supernatural goal as the sole beatifying end of man, so that he who does not attain the bliss of the vision of God has not arrived at the end for which man is created.

The invitation, instigation, and movement in the direction of God to be possessed in beatific vision proceed first from God. He is not only the natural but also the supernatural prime Mover. These operations, pertaining to the supernatural domain, are usually associated with the Person of the Holy Ghost. As in the case of the natural operations of God, so here too, Augustine teaches that God is not as the farmer who works externally, cultivating the soil in order to reap harvest, but that He works intrinsically, causing the seed to grow.<sup>115</sup>

The intrinsic operation of God in man reaches the very soul of man. God works upon the intellect and the will of man not only through created media but also by Himself. St. Augustine teaches

<sup>114</sup> *Ep.* 187, 3, 10 (PL 33, 836; CSEL 57, IV, 89).

<sup>115</sup> *In Io. Ev.* tr. 80, 2 (PL 35, 1839): "Ego et Pater unum sumus"; et ipse agricola est. Nec talis, quales sunt, qui extrinsecus operando exhibent ministerium; sed talis, ut det etiam intrinsecus incrementum." *In Io. Ev.* tr. 26, 7 (PL 35, 1609): "Omnes regni illius homines docibiles Dei erunt, non ab hominibus audient. Et si ab hominibus audiunt, tamen quod intelligunt, intus datur, intus coruscat, intus revelatur. Quid faciunt homines forinsecus annuntiantes? quid facio ego modo cum loquor? Strepitum verborum ingero auribus vestris. Nisi ergo revelet ille qui intus est, quid dico, aut quid loquor? Exterior cultor arboris, interior est Creator. Qui plantat et qui rigat, extrinsecus operatur: hoc facimus nos."

unequivocally that God illuminates the mind of man through grace when he says that the words of the human teacher who instructs us in the revelation of God would be in vain <sup>116</sup> if Christ did not at the same time instruct us inwardly, if His inspiration did not teach us.<sup>117</sup> In reference to the immediacy of the divine supernatural action upon the will,<sup>118</sup> St. Augustine appears to have undergone some evolution.<sup>119</sup> In works written prior to the year 417, he explained the inward action of the Holy Ghost upon the will not as immediately moving it, but as drawing it by the medium of enlightenment of the intellect.<sup>120</sup> In works written after the above mentioned date he teaches an immediate action of the Holy Ghost upon the will by the infusion of various impulses such as charity and *delectatio*. In fact the action, whereby the will is affected is said to be a greater gift than that whereby the intellect is enlightened; if we are to ascribe that which is less to God, why not that which is greater.<sup>121</sup> The Pelagians objected that such a grace given in the form of an impulse to the will, itself destroys man's free will, but Augustine denied that such a conclusion necessarily followed from his premises.<sup>122</sup>

Is this power of the Holy Ghost confined in its operations to the souls of the faithful or does it extend into the world of the infidels? It is the doctrine of St. Augustine that the Holy Spirit exerts His supernatural powers upon the understanding and the volition of those who are already justified, in whom He dwells as in a temple,

<sup>116</sup> *In Io. Ep. tr.* 3, 13 (PL 35, 2004): "forinsecus inaniter perstrepunt."

<sup>117</sup> *In Io. Ep. tr.* 3, 13 (PL 35, 2004): "Interior ergo magister est, qui docet, Christus docet, inspiratio ipsius docet."

<sup>118</sup> Cf. G. Vracken, *Der göttliche Konkurs zum freien Willensakt des Menschen beim hl. Augustinus* (Rome: 1943), pp. 16 ff.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. H. Lange, *De Gratia* (Freiburg in Br.: 1929), pp. 384 f.

<sup>120</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, I, 2, 21 (PL 40, 126 f.); *In Io. Ev. tr.* 26, 7 (PL 35, 1610): "Videte, quomodo trahit Pater: docendo delectat, non necessitatem imponendo. Ecce quomodo trahit."

<sup>121</sup> *De gratia Christi*, 26, 27 (PL 44, 374; CSEL 42, ed., C. Urba and J. Zycha, 147): "Istam Dei gratiam in divinis eloquiis manifestam etiam Pelagius manifeste fateatur. . . . Cognitionem et dilectionem, sicut sunt discernenda, discernat, quia scientia inflat, caritas aedificat—et tunc scientia non inflat, quando caritas aedificat—et cum sit utrumque donum Dei, sed unum minus alterum majus, non hic iustitiam nostram super laudem nostri justificatoris extollat, ut horum duorum quod minus est divino tribuat adjutorio, quod autem majus est humano usurpet arbitrio, et si consenserit nos gratia Dei accipere caritatem, non sic sentiat, tamquam ulla merita bona nostra praecesserint."

<sup>122</sup> Cf. *Op. imperf.*, III, 106 (PL 45, 1291 f.).



and whom He united in the one mystical body of Christ,<sup>123</sup> of which the Holy Ghost is the soul.<sup>124</sup> But Augustine likewise teaches that the Holy Ghost operates by His grace outside of the mystical body, inviting, beckoning, alluring men in the infidel world to enter the body which He vivifies.<sup>125</sup> He inwardly prepares, aids, and draws infidels to become faithful.<sup>126</sup>

This call of God (*vocatio Dei, vocatio fidei*) to embrace faith precedes all merit on the part of man and even free will itself; no one believes, or can believe, who is not called. God Himself causes the good will, due to which man is inclined to believe and wants to believe.<sup>127</sup> Hence this action of the Holy Ghost in the supernatural sphere is called the grace of faith.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, the Holy Ghost is not only operative in infidels through the *vocatio fidei* but is also solicitous about drawing back into the one Church, the mystical body of Christ, all those who have separated themselves from it by heresy and schism.<sup>129</sup>

St. Augustine draws a definite line of demarcation between those divine operations which belong to nature and those which pertain to supernature; between those actions which flow from nature and are necessary for its support, and those operations which are gratuitous and are consequent upon the elevation of man to the status of adopted children of God. The Bishop is keenly aware of the distinction between natural and supernatural operations in man. The doctrine of the former he develops in uncontroversial writings such as his commentaries on Genesis, his *Confessions*, etc.; whereas the doctrine of the latter is found in his many works against the Pelagians. When certain divine operations related in Scripture created theological difficulties, he solved the problem

<sup>123</sup> S. J. Grabowski, "St. Augustine and the Mystical Body of Christ," *Theological Studies*, VII (1946), 72 ff.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. S. J. Grabowski, "The Holy Ghost in the Mystical Body of Christ," *Theological Studies*, V (1944), 453-83; VI (1945), 62-84.

<sup>125</sup> *Sermo* 270, 6 (PL 38, 1243): "Ipse Spiritus Sanctus colligit nos: . . . Congregatur enim unitas corporis Christi ex omnibus linguis, per omnes scilicet gentes toto terrarum orbe diffusas."

<sup>126</sup> *Ep.* 194, 4, 18 (PL 33, 880; CSEL 57, IV, 190): "Spiritus Sanctus nondum inhabitans adjuvat ut sint fideles."

<sup>127</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, I, 2, 12 (PL 40, 118): "Etiam ipsam bonam voluntatem in nobis operante Deo fieri." Cf. A. Tymczak, *Nauka Św. Augustyna o Wierze* (Przemyśl: 1933), p. 137 ff.

<sup>128</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, I, 2, 2 (PL 40, 111).

<sup>129</sup> *De Bapt. c. Donat.*, IV, 21, 28 (PL 43, 173; CSEL 51, 257).

by saying that these operations are not those which pertain to God's inhabitation of the soul and His supernatural workings but are those which are natural and whereby God is everywhere present.<sup>130</sup>

From what has heretofore been stated it is manifest that scholastic and modern theology is in complete harmony with the doctrine of St. Augustine, who makes God's power and operations concerning the universe consist: 1. in the creation of all things, 2. in the positive and direct conservation of created things in existence,<sup>131</sup> 3. in the immediate concurrence of God with creatures in the production of their acts.<sup>132</sup> St. Augustine, however, is more direct and intent upon associating all these three actions of God, especially the first and the second, with the divine omnipresence.

Scholastic philosophy and theology of the thirteenth century established a clear-cut distinction between the divine essence and power, the divine nature and activity. It also applied that distinction to the matter at hand by distinguishing between the presence of the divine substance and the presence of the divine operation. While the tendency of the patristic theology was to associate and even to identify the divine presence with divine power and action, the tendency of the Scholastics was to associate it with the divine substance. In other words, the divine presence of the Fathers was dynamic, that of the Scholastics rather static. Nevertheless, to this day the divine presence is also frequently expressed in terms of divine activity or associated most intimately with that activity, as is evidenced by modern works of philosophy<sup>133</sup> and theology.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Ep. 187, 12, 36 (PL 33, 846; CSEL 57, IV, 114); cf. S. J. Grabowski, "The Holy Ghost in the Mystical Body of Christ according to St. Augustine," *Theological Studies*, V (1944), 470-71.

<sup>131</sup> W. J. Brosnan, *God Infinite, the World and Reason* (New York: 1943), pp. 90 ff.

<sup>132</sup> W. J. Brosnan, *op. cit.*, pp. 102 ff.

<sup>133</sup> E.g., G. Esser, *Theologia Naturalis* (Techny, Ill.: 1949), p. 238: "omnipraesentia Dei non mere in eo consistit, quod Deus et mundus in uno eodemque loco sint, sed praesentia Dei in mundo est dinamica seu activa. . . . Deus et mundus sunt quaedam unitas dinamica sui generis, cum Deus singulis rebus mundi contingentibus totus praesens est iisque continuo esse confert."

<sup>134</sup> E.g., F. Diekamp, *Theologiae Dogmaticae Manuale*, (Paris: 1944), II, 31: ". . . omnipotenti operatione suae praesentiae in mundo omnes creaturas in esse conservare." L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae* (Oeniponte: 1949), IV, 2, p. 434: "Unio hominis cum Deo beatifica non est ea quae habetur ratione omnipraesentiae Dei conservantis et cooperantis."

## CHAPTER VII

### STATIC PRESENCE: INBEING BY ESSENCE

**I**T is evident from what has already been said on the divine presence that Greek and Latin tradition have understood God's inbeing in the whole universe and in all individual entities composing the universe as a dynamic presence. This presence was conceived in terms of action, manifested in creation, conservation, co-operation with secondary causes, motion, and providence. It would seem that the early Fathers avoid making the divine substance pervade all things, and thus be present to all, in order not to implicate God in the universe in some pantheistic way. This attitude of the Christian Fathers and early Christian writers must be understood in the light of the historical circumstances in which they wrote; it reflects the backgrounds of the philosophy and religion of the opposing world which surrounded them.

In later Greek patristic tradition, e.g., in one of the five doctrinal treatises of Anastasius, there appears to be a reaction to this over-emphasis and one-sided presentation of the divine omnipresence. In any case, the treatise of Anastasius is an open and emphatic repudiation of the opinion of those who maintain that the omnipresence of God can be conceived in terms of action without involving at the same time and by the same token the presence of the divine substance. This sixth-century Patriarch of Antioch attacks, in his treatise *On the Immeasurableness of God*, those who diminish God by circumscribing His divine substance, and who make the universe void of its Creator. This they do, he says, when they teach that God is present by power but deny that God is present in the universe according to His nature.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Oratio II De Incircumscripto*, 1 (PG 89, 1331): "Eos dico, qui Deum imminuunt, et divinam substantiam circumscribunt . . . tradunt vacuum esse universum a Creatore universi . . . divinae naturae amplitudinem negantes."

More distinctly does Anastasius present the doctrine of his opponents when he distinguishes in their fashion and states that according to them God is present by power but not by substance. To use his own words: "God is, they say, power (*energia*) in all things, but not substance."<sup>2</sup> This power or "energy" is the work which has been accomplished by the action of the artisan, and as a result, the worker is in the work as the shipmaker, for instance, is in the ship which he made, or the weaver in the cloth he has woven.<sup>3</sup> Anastasius contends that this division of power and substance, action and nature, is impossible in God. Wherever there is evidence of the divine dynamic presence, there also by the same token is evidence of His static presence, for power and essence in God are inseparable.<sup>4</sup> This form of argument, which occurs explicitly (as far as I am aware) for the first time in the patristic age, was destined to be of great service to those Scholastics who, in the same fashion, proved the presence of the divine substance in all things from the divine creative and conservative powers of God. Bishop Anastasius says:

Because the divine nature is a living nature, it has living "energies," that is, operations, which work without intermission: but an "energy" cannot emanate in any manner without a substance; wherever there is an action (*energies*), there a substance will be discovered from which it (the action) flows: both are uncircumscribed; on that account they are absolutely inseparable.<sup>5</sup>

By that term *energia* the Patriarch of Antioch means "a living and ever active virtue, proceeding from an operating substance."<sup>6</sup> And he concludes his discussion and demonstration by saying that "God is present in all things not only by *energia*, that is action, but

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*, 2: "‘Energia,’ inquit, in omnibus rebus est Deus; substantia vero minime."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*: "Energiam vocant opus energia, id est, operatione confectum, ut fabricator navis est in navi a se fabricata, et tentor in pallio quod texuit."

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*: "Atqui dicam ego inseparabilem esse a natura Dei energiam ejus."

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*: "Quia vero viva est natura divina, energias, id est operationes, habet viventes, et sine intermissione agentes: sine substantia autem non potest ullo modo prodire energia; ubi enim energia cernitur, simul cum hac cernitur substantia ex qua prodit: utrumque enim est incircumscriptum; quomobrem omnino sunt inter se inseparabilia."

<sup>6</sup> *Loc. cit.*, 4 (PG 89, 1332): "Energiam autem voco virtutem viventem et semper agentem, prodeuntem ex substantia operante."



also by substance;" <sup>7</sup> and "since God is a substance, all things which are, are filled with the divine substance." <sup>8</sup>

In consequence of the early Greek tradition, the Latin also (up to the time of St. Augustine) is practically unanimous in conceiving the all-present God in the terms and form of activity. It is true that St. Hilary expressly states that God is present by nature (*per naturam suam praesens est*), yet in that same passage he seems to interpret that presence by divine activity.<sup>9</sup> In another passage he seems to express the same concept of the divine presence by nature but does so by saying that He is present by the action of His nature.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, the term *natura* (*ousia*) is not used among early Christian writers in the same sense as that established in later theology. In the writings of the early Fathers it denotes the sensible properties or qualities, or even the complexus of accidents by which a substantial nature is manifested and discerned by the senses.<sup>11</sup> An example of this use among the Latins is Tertullian who says that a stone, or iron are substances but that the nature of these substances is hardness.<sup>12</sup> In his doctrine on the Holy Trinity, St. Hilary speaks indistinctly of substance, nature, essence, unity, or equality of genus in opposition to person. By nature he frequently means that which appertains to a thing by virtue of its birth; it thus stands in contradistinction to that which proceeds from the free will. The term is also used to designate that which constitutes the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*: "Adest igitur in omnibus Deus non solum energia, id est operatione, sed etiam substantia."

<sup>8</sup> *Loc. cit.*, 5 (PG 89, 1333): "Cum enim Deus sit substantia, omnia quae sunt, divina substantia implevit."

<sup>9</sup> Hilarius, *Tr. in Ps.* 124, 6 (PL 9, 683; CSEL 22, 602): "Adest enim; et cum fideliter invocatur, per naturam suam praesens est. Spiritus namque est omnia penetrans et continens. Non enim secundum nos corporalis est, ut, cum alicubi adsit, absit aliunde; sed virtute praesenti et se, quacunque est aliquid, porrigenti, cum replente omnia ejus spiritu in omnibus sit, tamen ei, qui in eum credat, adstistit."

<sup>10</sup> Hilarius, *De Trin.*, II, 31 (PL 10, 72): "per naturae suae virtutem ubique est."

<sup>11</sup> Cf. St. John Chrysostom, *To the People of Ant.*, 4 (PL 49, 63); St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Apol.*, 57 (PG 45, 1262).

<sup>12</sup> Tert., *De Anima*, 32 (ed. J. H. Waszink [Amsterdam: 1947], 46; ed. CSEL 20 ed. A. Reifferscheid and G. Wissowa, 355): "Aliud est autem substantia, aliud natura substantiae; siquidem substantia propria est rei cujusque, natura vero potest esse communis. Suscipe exemplum. Substantia est lapis, ferrum: duritia lapidis et ferri natura substantiae est."

very being of something; it is thus equivalent to the essence of that thing. And just as essence so also nature can have a concrete meaning and signify the thing itself.<sup>13</sup> In St. Augustine the terms *substantia*, *essentia*, *natura* are used practically as synonyms, although at times he resents the indiscriminate use of the terms.<sup>14</sup>

A definite and clear-cut static presence is expressed much later by St. Leo the Great when he states that the divine essence is everywhere totally present.<sup>15</sup> This last testimony is, of course, after the time of St. Augustine. What about the Bishop of Hippo himself?

Since St. Augustine follows in the footsteps of Greek and Latin tradition, a continuation and development of the dynamic presence would be expected in his writings. As a matter of fact, such is the case, as was seen in the previous chapter. All this time God's presence has been translated in Augustinian terms of divine activity and divine operation relative to the object to which God is said to be present. In other words, the divine active power is primarily bound up with, and inseparable from, the concept of omnipresence. To use Saint Augustine's own words: "[He] is everywhere present, not by the spaces of places, but the power of [His] majesty."<sup>16</sup>

What is St. Augustine's doctrine of the nature of God? What relationship exists between His power and His will, between His will and His essence? A concept of these fundamentals of the divine nature will necessarily have a bearing on the nature of the divine omnipresence. The divine power is rooted in the divine will. It is the divine will which creates; it is the divine will which preserves created objects in existence. A vast difference, however, is to be noted in God and in man in the relationship between power and the will. In man will and power are not only distinct but also separate; in what it purposes to accomplish the will must be measured by, and be proportionate to, man's physical and moral powers: the will cannot purpose to undertake any more than the physical strength of the individual permits. But such is not the case

<sup>13</sup> Cf. P. Smulders, *La doctrine trinitaire de S. Hilaire de Poitiers* (Rome: 1944), pp. 234-35, pp. 283-84.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *De Trinit.*, VII, 5, 10 (PL 42, 942).

<sup>15</sup> Leo M., *Sermo* 25, 3 (PL 54, 210): "Nam illa essentia quae semper ubique tota est, locali descensione non eguit."

<sup>16</sup> *De serm. Dom. in monte*, II, 5, 18 (PL 34, 1277): "ubique praesens est, non locorum spatiis, sed majestatis potentia."

with God; will and power in God are identically the same. More than that, they are identical with God's essence: they are God Himself. Again the very words of Augustine: "The will and the power of God is God Himself."<sup>17</sup>

This identification is true not only of will and power but also of all of God's attributes. For the first and highest Life it is not one thing to be and another to live, but it is one and the same thing to be and to live. Likewise for the first and highest Intellect, it is not one thing to live and another to know, but to know is to live and to be. All of these are identical in the divine Substance. The same is true of all of His perfections.<sup>18</sup> God does not participate in the perfections predicated of Him, but He simply is that which is ascribed to Him.

St. Augustine adduces as an example the attribute of greatness as predicated of God and expatiates upon it. The quality of greatness is applied differently to God and to creatures. In created things it is a different thing to be and a different thing to be great. Even when the adjective "great" is predicated of man, man is something else from the greatness by which he is great. True pure greatness is that quality not only by which that man is great who is great, but also by which whatever else is great is so. Thus there is a difference between greatness itself and those things which are said to be great. Indeed that greatness which is a primatial greatness, a source-greatness, is far more excellent than that greatness which is such by participation. God is not great by that greatness which is not Himself. In other words, God does not possess greatness by participation, otherwise greatness would be greater than God; but nothing can be greater than God. He is great by that greatness which is His own essence.<sup>19</sup> God is His own greatness, as He "can be said to be His own divinity."

<sup>17</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 4, 6 (PL 32, 735-36; ed. M. Skutella, 129): "voluntas enim et potentia Dei, Deus ipse est."

<sup>18</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 10, 11 (PL 42, 931): "Ubi est prima et summa vita, cui non est aliud vivere et aliud esse, sed idem est esse et vivere: et primus et summus intellectus, cui non est aliud vivere et aliud intelligere, sed id quod est intelligere, hoc vivere, hoc esse est, unum omnia."

<sup>19</sup> *De Trinit.*, V, 10, 11 (PL 42, 918): "Sicut ergo non dicimus tres essentias, ita non dicimus tres magnitudines, neque tres magnos. In rebus enim quae participatione magnitudinis magnae sunt, quibus est aliud esse, aliud magnas esse, sicut magna domus, et magnus mons, et magnus animus; in his ergo rebus

Such is the profound speculation of St. Augustine concerning the nature and perfections of God. The same is to be said of the other attributes predicated of God, namely, His goodness, eternity, omnipotence, etc.<sup>20</sup>

These assertions concerning the full identification between the intellect of God and His essence, the will of God and His essence, and between all the other attributes of God and that same essence are founded in that condition of God which the Bishop of Hippo and later theologians designate as the simplicity of God. This term, taken according to its Latin etymology and its technical significance in the theology of the Fathers and the Scholastics, means "devoid of composition." Simplicity, therefore, designates a great perfection. The Saint sharply and profoundly expresses the notion of the divine simplicity when he says that God is simple because He is what He has.<sup>21</sup> In other words, while we say that man has power, of God we say that He is power, knowledge, wisdom, holiness, etc. St. Augustine recognizes a multiplicity of attributes or perfections in God, but these are not to be considered as distinct from His Being, but rather are that Being. In the words of St. Augustine: "[He is said to be] multiple because there are many [perfections] which He has; [He is said to be] simple, however, because He is not anything else than what He has."<sup>22</sup>

aliud est magnitudo, aliud quod ab ea magnitudine magnum est, et prorsus non hoc est magnitudo quod est magna domus. Sed illa est vera magnitudo, qua non solum magna est domus quae magna est; sed etiam qua magnum est quicquid aliud magnum dicitur: ut aliud sit ipsa magnitudo, aliud ea quae ab illa magna dicuntur. Quae magnitudo utique primitus magna est, multoque excellentius quam ea quae participatione ejus magna sunt. Deus autem quia non ea magnitudine magnus est quae non est quod est ipse, ut quasi particeps ejus sit Deus cum magnus est; alioquin illa erit major magnitudo quam Deus, Deo autem non est aliquid majus: ea igitur magnitudine magnus est quia ipse est eadem magnitudo. Et ideo sicut non dicimus tres essentias, sic nec tres magnitudines: hoc est enim Deo esse, quod est magnum esse. Eadem causa nec magnos tres dicimus, sed unum magnum: quia non participatione magnitudinis Deus magnus est, sed se ipso magno magnus est; quia ipse sua est magnitudo. Hoc et de bonitate, et de aeternitate, et de omnipotentia Dei dictum sit, omnibusque omnino praedicamentis quae de Deo possunt pronuntiari, quod ad se ipsum dicitur, non translate ac per similitudinem, sed proprie: si tamen de illo proprie aliquid dici ore hominis potest."

<sup>20</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>21</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 10 (PL 41, 325; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 475): "ideo simplex dicitur, quoniam quod habet, hoc est, excepto quod relative quaeque persona ad alteram dicitur."

<sup>22</sup> *Ep.* 169 ad Evodium, II, 7 (PL 33, 745; CSEL 44 ed. A. Goldbacher, III,



The ultimate basis for the identification of the attributes of God with His essence is to be sought in the most perfect kind of being that God is. The cause for the existence of all created beings lies outside of them, but God's Being with all its perfections is entirely independent of any external cause. The eternal, immutable and all-present substance<sup>23</sup> which is God, has the source and the cause of His Being in and by Himself; to use the words of Augustine: *in semetipso*.<sup>24</sup> All other entities draw their being from Him as a source and a cause.<sup>25</sup> He alone has being in the true and highest sense,<sup>26</sup> and He has it originally—*primitus*—as a source-being.<sup>27</sup> God—in St. Augustine's simple and succinct expression—*summe est*,<sup>28</sup> that is, in the highest possible degree.

Of God it must be said that He truly and really is; whereas of other beings it can be said that they are, since they are from God; but compared with His fullness of being they may be said not to be. And yet while they are, they exist because they are maintained in their limited being by His infinite Being through the divine power of His presence, which pervades and sustains them.<sup>29</sup> Such is the Christian God of St. Augustine above whom there is nothing, outside of whom there is nothing, without whom there is nothing. He is a God "under whom is all, in whom is all and with whom is all."<sup>30</sup>

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617): "Multiplex enim, quoniam multa sunt quae habet; simplex autem, quia non aliud quam quod habet est."

<sup>23</sup> *In lo. Ev. tr.* I, 8 (PL 35, 1383).

<sup>24</sup> *In lo. Ev. tr.* XIX, 11-13 (PL 35, 1548-50).

<sup>25</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 15 (PL 41, 331; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 483); *ibid.*, XII, 5 (PL 41, 353; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 518): ". . . Deus, qui summe est atque ob hoc ab illo facta est omnis essentia, quae non summe est."

<sup>26</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 159): "Quamvis ergo illa aeterna incommutabilisque natura, quod Deus est, habens in se quod sit, sicut Moysi dictum est, 'Ego sum qui sum' (Exod. III:14); longe scilicet aliter quam sunt ista quae facta sunt: quoniam illud vere ac primitus est, quod eodem modo semper est, nec solum non commutatur, sed commutari omnino non potest; nihil horum quae fecit existens, et omnia primitus habens, sicut ipse est."

<sup>27</sup> *Loc. cit.*; *De Trinit.*, V, 10, 11 (PL 42, 918).

<sup>28</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 5 (PL 41, 353; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 518); *Contra Secund. Manich.*, 10 (PL 42, 586; CSEL 25, II, 919).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. J. Mausbach, *Die Ethik des heiligen Augustinus* (2 ed.; Freiburg in Br.: 1929), I, 64.

<sup>30</sup> *Solil.*, I, 1, 4 (PL 32, 871): "Deus supra quem nihil, extra quem nihil, sine quo nihil est. Deus sub quo totum est, in quo totum est, cum quo totum est."

And I viewed the other things below Thee, and perceived that they neither altogether are, nor altogether are not. They are, indeed, because they are from Thee; but are not, because they are not what Thou art. For that truly is which remains immutably. It is good, then, for me to cleave unto God, for if I remain not in Him, neither shall I in myself; but He, remaining in Himself, reneweth all things. And Thou art the Lord my God, since Thou standest not in need of my goodness.<sup>31</sup>

Notwithstanding Augustine's reiterated assertions that "God is," he has not penetrated philosophically into the deepest meaning of this all-important phrase. While at times he seems to have pierced the thin curtain which separated him from grasping and applying the philosophical notion of existence to beings, he falls short of it; he rather reduces the existence of an object to its essence. And thus when he describes the Christian God as the one "Who is," Augustine "at once falls back upon the Greek identification of being with the notion of immateriality, intelligibility, immutability, and unity."<sup>32</sup> The ontology of St. Augustine is not "existential"—it does not reach to the very act of existence (the *esse*)—but is "essential"—it encompasses the essence,<sup>33</sup> the *ens*. In this conception of God St. Augustine's theology is but the natural development of the religious philosophy of Plato and Plotinus; whereas the existentialism of St. Thomas<sup>34</sup> is a sequence of the philosophy of Aristotle.<sup>35</sup>

This essentialist interpretation of St. Augustine's philosophy

<sup>31</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 11, 17 (PL 32, 742; ed. Skutella, 141); tr. in W. J. Oates, *Basic Writings of St. Augustine* (New York: 1948), I, 102.

<sup>32</sup> E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), p. 60.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *L'Être et l'essence* (Paris: 1948); *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: 1949).

<sup>34</sup> In I *Sent.*, d. 33, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1<sup>m</sup> in which he says that "to be (*esse*) is the very act whereby an essence is: *dicitur esse ipse actus essentiae*; cf. *Quaest. disp.: De potentia* qu. VII, a. 2 and 9; see E. Gilson, *Realisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance* (Paris: 1939), pp. 220-22; *Id.*, "Existence and Philosophy," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, XXI (1946), 5-16; G. B. Phelan, "The Existentialism of St. Thomas," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, XXI (1946), 25-40; H. Renard, "Essence and Existence," *Proceedings etc.*, 53-66.

<sup>35</sup> Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion* (New York: 1925), p. 17: "The religious side of Plato's thought was not revealed in its full power till the time of Plotinus in the third century A.D.; that of Aristotle, one might say without undue paradox, not till its exposition by Aquinas in the thirteenth."

of being is not acceptable to all Augustinian and Thomistic investigators. There are some neo-Scholastics, such as de Finance, Romeyer, who maintain that the Thomistic existentialism is not simple Aristotelianism, but a composite of Aristotelian and Platonic elements. The contribution of Plato and Augustine would be the insistence on the importance of *esse*, that of St. Thomas the application of the Aristotelian act-potency couplet in the order of existence.

In the Book of Exodus<sup>36</sup> God reveals Himself, or still better, His own intimate nature, to Moses under the name of "Jahveh"—as the "I am." Here is the keynote of the new theodicy for the Hebrews of the Old Testament. This name also became the cornerstone of the doctrine of the nature of God for the early Christian Fathers. This revelation of God concerning Himself plays a great role in the theology of St. Augustine.<sup>37</sup> Commenting on this theophany, he asserts that God is, by virtue of these words, the very Being itself (*ipsum esse*). Being is proper to God in such intensity and perfection that creatures, who receive their being, compared with the Being of God are as if they were not, for they do not possess the true, independent, and immutable Being that He alone is.<sup>38</sup> His Being is such as to be a reality, which is the reason, the foundation and the support of all other existing realities. All other realities exist because this highest reality imparts not only existence to them through creation but also continued subsistence through His preserving power. In this interpretation of the word "Jahveh" as designating Being itself and the unlimited excellence contained in that Being in relation to other finite and contingent beings, St. Augustine is merely re-echoing the constant voice of a long-standing patristic tradition.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Exod. 3:14.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de saint Augustin* (2 me éd.; Paris: 1943), pp. 27-28; *id.*, *Le Thomisme* (5 me éd.; Paris: 1945), pp. 73-76; *id.*, *Philosophie et Incarnation* (Montreal: 1947), pp. 10 ff.

<sup>38</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 134, 4 (PL 37, 1741): "Sublatis de medio omnibus quibus appellari posset et dici Deus, ipsum esse se vocari respondit; et tamquam hoc esset ei nomen: 'Hoc dices eis,' inquit: 'qui est, misit me.' Ita enim ille est, ut in ejus comparatione ea, quae facta sunt, non sint. Illo non comparato, sunt, quoniam ab illo sunt; illi autem comparata, non sunt, quia verum esse, incommutabile esse est, quod ille solus est." Cf. *Sermo* 7, 7 (PL 38, 66); *De Trinit.*, I, 1, 2 (PL 42, 821); *ibid.*, VII, 5, 10 (PL 42, 942).

<sup>39</sup> For example, S. Ephraem (c. 306-73), *Adversus haereses sermones*, *Sermo*

The name "Jahveh," the "I am who am," the "He is" has occasioned a profound theology in the writings of St. Augustine. The verb "is" is predicated of God without the addition of any determining attribute. Of all other creatures we assert that they are this or that, are such or are not such; but of God we can simply say that He *is* and that is all that need be said. In fact, we are so accustomed to adding an attribute after the verb "is" because it is predicated so frequently of created beings that when used of God there is the tendency to say not simply that "He is" but "what He is." <sup>40</sup> St. Augustine makes the unaccustomed statement that God is "is." Thus, on one occasion, he remarks that God is "the is," as the Good is the good of all goodness.<sup>41</sup> In another passage of another work, when speaking of the manner in which we know the good, Augustine states that whatsoever in any degree *is*, is good. The reason which he gives is because it comes from Him who is, not merely in some degree, but is "the is." The text in this latter passage is the one adopted by Skutella <sup>42</sup> and accepted most recently by Gilson.<sup>43</sup> The text accepted by de Labriolle varies somewhat from the one already quoted when it states that same reason in these terms: "because it is from Him, who is not merely in some degree, but what He is, is." <sup>44</sup> Many of our current English translations of the Confessions follow this text.<sup>45</sup>

53, (S.P.N. *Ephraem Syri opera omnia quae exstant, graece, syriace, latine*, ed. J. S. Assemani [Romae: 1732-1746], II, 555); S. Hilary (315-66), *De Trinit.*, I, 5 (PL 10, 28); S. Gregory of Nazianzus (329-89), *Orat.* 30 [theol. 4], 18 (MG 36, 125; ed. A. J. Mason, *The five theological orations of Gregory of Nazianzus*, [Cambridge Patristic Texts; Cambridge: 1899]; p. 135); Gregory of Nyssa (335-94), *Contra Eunomium*, 8 (MG 45, 768; ed. G. Oehler, [Halle: 1865], I, 362); S. Cyril of Alexandria (444), *In Isaiam*, I, 4, or 2 (MG 70, 924).

<sup>40</sup> E. Gilson, *Philosophie et Incarnation selon Saint Augustin* (Montreal: 1947), pp. 26-27.

<sup>41</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 134, 4 (PL 37, 1741): "Est enim est, sicut bonorum bonum, bonum est."

<sup>42</sup> *Confess.*, XIII, 31, 46 (ed. Skutella, p. 367): "ab illo enim est, qui non aliquo modo est, sed est est."

<sup>43</sup> E. Gilson, *Philosophie et Incarnation selon Saint Augustin* (Montreal: 1947), p. 27. Gilson abandons, as less accurate, the text which he accepted in his previous work, *L'esprit de la philosophie médiévale* (2me éd.; Paris: 1944), p. 53: "ab illo enim est, qui non aliquo modo est, sed est, est."

<sup>44</sup> *Confess. loc. cit.*, ed. P. de Labriolle (Paris: 1926), II, 404: "ab illo enim est, qui non aliquo modo est, sed quod est, est." However the same author deviates from this text in his own translation: "puisque'il procède de Celui qui n'existe pas d'une façon quelconque, mais qui *est* absolument."

<sup>45</sup> E.g., *Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, ed. by W. J. Oates (New York:



The nature of God as expressed by this revealed name is the reason why God is so intimately and properly present to all creatures. In fact, He is more present to them than they are to themselves, for He is the *ipsum esse*, the subsisting Being, while they possess the *esse participatum*, a being communicated by Him. He is the cause, while they are the effect in relation to that cause. He is necessary and has no cause outside of Himself, they are contingent and have a cause external to them. He is, therefore, more present to the effect than the effect is to itself. The creature is not present to itself except in dependence on the presence of the Cause which brings it into existence and sustains it. He is more necessary for our being than we are to ourselves, and thus God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. Hence the words of the African Doctor: "Thou wert more inward to me than my most inward part; and higher than my highest."<sup>46</sup> For a contingent being, if it exists, exists outside of the cause of its being, and, when it exists, it is dependent upon that cause, for it must continually receive a communication of existence from the subsisting Being.

From these assertions it is evident, therefore, that although St. Augustine underscores the divine creative and conserving powers exercised on all things called into being, and explains God's presence by these operations, he also includes the essence of God as inseparable from the operative properties of God. Moreover, the essence, nature, or substance of God (Augustine uses all these terms indiscriminately) is identical not only with the operative attributes in God but also with the quiescent properties. It is to be noted, however, that Augustine explicitly identifies the presence of God with the creative and sustaining powers. The identification of essence and the inherent quiescent attributes on the one hand with the will and power of God on the other, is implicitly contained in the theological principles laid down throughout his works in his doctrine of God.

St. Augustine is true, therefore, to the tradition of the patristic age in depicting the inbeing of God in the universe in a dynamic

1948), I, 253: "Because it is from Him who Is not in any degree, but He Is that He Is." *Confessions*, translated by E. B. Pusey (London: 1945), p. 344: "For from Him it is, who Himself Is not in degree, but what He Is, Is."

<sup>46</sup> *Confess.*, III, 6, 11 (PL 32, 688; ed. M. Skutella, 45): "Tu autem eras interior intimo meo, et superior summo meo." Cf. J. Gervais, "Notre inclusion dans le Christ," *Rev. d'Université d'Ottawa*, XVI (1946), 197\*.

manner. Errors of Greek philosophy on the deity and its presence which were counteracted by the earlier Greek Fathers constitute also the background of his writings. Hence his insistence on a dynamic presence and his neglect or omission of direct mention of the static presence of God, viz., presence by essence. There is no passage in his works (as far as I can ascertain) which would expressly deny or assert that the divine substance, essence, or nature as such is present in the universe. But from Augustine's copious and well developed theology on God it is evident that God is present to all things not only in the capacity of a creator, preserver, provider, mover, but also through His substance. And thus while the dynamic inbeing of God is explicitly and emphatically taught, the static omnipresence is implicitly contained in the theology and philosophy of his works.

Besides tradition and the circumstances of his time, which were not different from those of the Fathers, St. Augustine could be expected to be guided by caution and circumspection. A theologian and a philosopher, who extricated himself from materialistic pantheism with the greatest difficulty, and who now recognized the power of God inherent and pervasive in the universe, and the universe completely dependent upon God, would exercise all care not to implicate his God in some sort of oneness with the universe. It is not amiss, therefore, to expect and interpret the omission of all references to the presence of God's essence, nature, or substance in the universe as the result of a desire to safeguard his teaching against any taint of pantheism.

A reminiscence of the Fathers in general and of St. Augustine in particular is found in the manner in which the Scholastics have expressed themselves with regard to the manner of the presence of God. While they explicitly and emphatically taught that God is present in the universe by operation and by essence, they also asserted that He had to be brought into some positive contact with the universe in order to be present in it. They compare the difference of a body and a spirit in contacting the universe. Thus St. Thomas teaches that a body having extension is applied to place through the contact of its dimensive quantity. Whereas spiritual substances, since they are devoid of dimensive quantity, are applied to place through the contact of power, that is, either by informing

matter (as does the soul) or by exerting their action upon matter.<sup>47</sup> God cannot inform matter for this would be tantamount to pantheism, but He is present through his operations in matter or bodies.

Divine knowledge is particularly bound up with the divine presence in the writings of the Fathers and especially of St. Augustine. The Bishop of Hippo explicitly lays down the principle that there is full identity between the divine essence and divine knowledge. This statement, of course, is already contained in the more general law alluded to above, that there is identity between the divine essence and the attributes of God. Augustine asserts: "That which is God's knowledge is also His wisdom, His essence, or substance. Because in the wonderful simplicity of His nature it is not one thing to know and another to be; but to know is the same as to be."<sup>48</sup>

The doctrine of the divine omniscience reached a high stage of comprehensive development in the writings of St. Augustine. It is not only his keen penetration into the domain of the divine that one admires but also the devotion and the attention with which he treats of such abstract themes. Augustine teaches that God's knowledge of the universe penetrates to every individual object, no matter how minute and how insignificant. It is not laborious or troublesome for God to know the infinite objects constituting the actual universality of things or to know infinite potentialities.<sup>49</sup> Divine knowing is a necessary prerequisite for the creation of all things but it is also consequent upon it since it is involved in the conservation of things. God must know all possibilities in order to create a complex universe with its multitudinous variety of beings, but He must also continue to know

<sup>47</sup> St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 8, a. 1; q. 52, a. 1; *Contra Gent.*, III, 68; cf. A. Fuerst, *The Omnipresence of God in Selected Writings between 1220-1270* (Washington, D.C.: 1951), pp. 189; 193 ff.

<sup>48</sup> *De Trinit.*, XV, 13, 22 (PL 42, 1076).

<sup>49</sup> *Sermo* 70, 2, 3 (PL 38, 441): "Tu homo cum sis, quia laboras si omnia domus tuae noveris et pertineant ad te omnia verba, omnia facta servorum tuorum, putas et Deum sic laborare ut attendat ad te, qui non laboravit ut crearet te? Oculum in te non intendit suum, qui fecit tuum? Non eras, et creavit te ut esses: non te curat, cum jam sis, qui vocat ea quae non sunt, tamquam sint (Rom. 4:17)? Non ergo tibi hoc promittas. Velis, nolis, videt te; et ab ejus oculis non est ubi abscondas te."

the things which He has created. He can be ignorant or unaware of no creature at any time.<sup>50</sup> Just as it is impossible for a creature to be present anywhere where God is not, so it is impossible to escape His knowledge. His knowledge is inseparable from His essence and His operation. It is founded, like all His other perfections, in the fullness of His being.<sup>51</sup>

#### INFLUENCE ON SCHOLASTICS

In this doctrine of the dynamic presence of God, as presented by the Fathers and by St. Augustine, are to be found the beginnings and the foundations for the arguments of many Scholastics that the divine omnipresence can be proved from the divine activity inherent in the universe and all created beings.<sup>52</sup> Such is the teaching of St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, Suarez, and many other older and recent Scholastics. They argue in this fashion: God must be present wherever He creates or can create anything. Moreover, God is immediately active in all things actually created and existing, since He does not operate by some medium to which his power or action would be communicated. For such activities as creation, conservation, and the co-operation with all movements of creatures are such as to be exclusively proper to God. And thus in these activities no created agent can serve either as a principal or as an instrumental cause. The proof concludes: therefore, God is substantially present there where He operates—creating, conserving, and cooperating with created action; in other words, the presence of God is known from the divine activity.<sup>53</sup>

However, there are other Scholastics and scholastic-minded writers, such as Scotus and the Scotists, Occam, Biel, Toletus, Vasquez, Mercier, who maintain that the argument which proves the substantial presence of God from divine activity or dynamic presence, is inconclusive. It is invalid, they say, to draw the conclusion that God is present according to His divine substance from the fact that He is present according to His activity, be it creative or preservative. They contend that the foundation of the

<sup>50</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XVI, 5 (PL 41, 483; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 131): "qui numquam potest aliquid ignorare."

<sup>51</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28, ed. J. Zycha, I, 159).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. J. J. Urraburu, *Theodocea* (Vallisoleti: 1899), I, 487-96.

<sup>53</sup> G. Esser, *Theologia Naturalis* (Techny, Ill.: 1949), p. 194.



proof, viz., that "action from a distance" is metaphysically impossible, cannot be proven. Action from a distance (*actio in distans*) is an action by which an effect is produced by an agent there, where the agent or cause was present neither in his own person, nor through persons to whom his action was communicated.

Their mode of arguing follows. In the very concept of a transient action, these following elements are found: 1. the being that brings about the effect by its own power; 2. the being which is the recipient of this action, as the *subjectum patiens*; 3. a real distinction between the efficient cause and the object acted upon; 4. such a proportion between both of these, that the acting cause may bring about an effect in the object acted upon. For the effect is a new reality which is caused in the patient, the *subjectum patiens*, by the acting cause.

There is no evidence, they maintain, that the proportion between the acting cause and the object acted upon should be such that both beings must be directly or indirectly contiguous to each other. This contact, of course, would be necessary, directly or indirectly, if the effect passed over into the object acted upon from the acting cause. But the agent does not operate in such wise that some particle of reality is separated from him and is attached to the object of his action; for the action considered in itself is an *accidens* (to use a term of Aristotle and the Scholastics) which cannot pass from one being into another, and the new effect which arises in the object acted upon is an accident of the latter, brought out of the potentiality of that being by the action of the cause. And thus, since it is not evident that an agent cannot cause an effect there, where he is not, the exponents of this opinion argue, it cannot be established from the fact that God creates, preserves, and concurs that He is also there in His essence.

On the contrary, in the opinion of those who maintain that God's static presence can be deduced from His dynamic presence, "action from a distance" is contradictory. It necessarily follows that wherever the divine power is, there also is the divine substance. Their argument runs thus: The being *in fieri* is determined by the action, and the action is determined by the active power of the agent; for the effect is the end to which the action is adapted. But an action is a reality, which is in the object acted upon, i.e., the "patient."

Therefore, the action is an act of the *potentia activa* and is at the same time in the object. But an action cannot be an act of the *potentia activa* and be at the same time in the object, if the cause has no direct or indirect contact with the object acted upon, or is, in other words, distant from it; for one and the same reality cannot be in two separate entities.<sup>54</sup>

Here is a summary of their argument as proposed by one of the recent adherents of this opinion.

The appropriation of the effect *in fieri* to the agent determining it as the action of that agent is a reality. It is a reality intrinsic either to the agent or to the effect *in fieri*, for it is the foundation of the necessary relation between agent and action.—But it is not in the agent.—Therefore, it is intrinsic to the effect *in fieri*.

Now, by the meaning of the word *intrinsic*, whatever is intrinsic to the effect *in fieri* must be constituted as intrinsic by the sole presence of a principle to the effect either really distinct or not from the effect; for the statement merely signifies that that intrinsic reality must *be* something. This principle can be only the patient (or *passum*) or a reality efficiently produced by the agent or the agent itself.—But it can easily be shown that it is not the patient. And if it is a reality efficiently produced by the cause, it is either the being *in fieri* of the effect or some mode of this *fieri* really distinct from it.—But it is not the being *in fieri* of the effect. Nor is it a mode really distinct from this *fieri* and produced by the agent.—Therefore, it is the agent itself.

There is another question on presence and place relative to God which seems to have its roots in patristic writings, viz., whether divine action or divine immensity is the ultimate reason for God's omnipresence. And again, St. Thomas and his followers apparently lean on the teaching of the Fathers when they assert that spiritual substances, in general, are present in place through their actions, virtue, or power. Just as material substances occupy place by reason of their quantity, so spirits are in place or space by virtue of their action. In reference to God, He creates things by virtue of His power; through it He comes in contact with them, and by it He is present to them.<sup>55</sup> From this it follows that the divine activity in the universe is not merely a manifestation of God's pres-

<sup>54</sup> Cf. A. Little, "A Metaphysical Argument against the Possibility of Action from a Distance," *Gregorianum*, XXVII (1946), 576 ff.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, Ia, q.8, a.2, ad 2; *Contra Gentes*, III, 68.

ence, but also a constituting factor of that presence. The divine activity is, therefore, ontologically first, and consequent upon it is the presence of the divine substance and likewise consequent upon that divine activity is our knowledge of the presence of the divine substance. In the order of being the dynamic presence precedes the static presence of God.

However, there are other Scholastics who maintain that the root of omnipresence is to be sought in the divine immensity. Their arguments are these: 1. God is active in a place, because it is; we must therefore first have the place, before we can have the activity in it. 2. To be present is a simple and pure perfection; but presence can be conceived without having any activity adjoined to it. Thus God can be envisaged as being present, on account of His infinitude, in all places, which can be made real. And this is precisely His immensity. Therefore it, and not His action, is the basis for the divine omnipresence.

These are further and more complex developments of the doctrine of the presence of God which were not directly treated by the Fathers, but which received an impulse in one or the other direction from what they had said on the matter. After the more fundamental matters on the divine presence had been obtained, and error had been banished, the Christian mind, under the auspices of the Scholastics, was able to probe more deeply and accurately into what the Christian Fathers had left unsaid or undeveloped.

#### THE DIVINE PRESENCE BY INHABITATION

As in the order of nature, a distinction was made between the dynamic and static presences, so also in the order of grace there is a twofold consideration of the divine presence: first, an operative presence in man through grace inciting and aiding him in the production of meritorious deeds; second, an abiding presence of God in the soul, a divine inhabitation corresponding in a manner to the static divine presence in the universe.<sup>56</sup> St. Augustine teaches that although God is everywhere "by the presence of the divinity" (*per divinitatis praesentiam*), He dwells only in certain individuals "by the grace of inhabitation" (*per inhabitationis gratiam*). Au-

<sup>56</sup> Cf. E. J. Carney, *The Doctrine of St. Augustine on Sanctity* (Washington, D.C.: 1945), pp. 108 ff.

gustine likewise distinguishes between the operations of God in the supernatural order and His inhabitation belonging to that same order. The Holy Ghost is operative in the infidel world, for no man can be converted to the faith without His grace, yet He is not said to inhabit such on account of His intrinsic operations. Augustine considers God's indwelling in the soul as something wonderful and as a token of God's love (*a gratia dilectionis*).<sup>57</sup>

The abiding presence of God is likened to the indwelling in a temple.<sup>58</sup> Because the dwelling place of God is called heaven, so the just man, blessed by the presence of inhabitation, becomes a heaven.<sup>59</sup> This type of presence, brought about by the renovation of man through the sacrament of baptism, is effected through the infusion of grace and charity into the soul. The soul is thus rendered just, holy, well-ordered in itself and towards God, in a word, it becomes God-like.<sup>60</sup> As a soul partakes in a greater or lesser degree of grace and charity, it participates accordingly in a greater or lesser degree in the inhabiting presence of God. The presence of inhabitation is not equal in each just soul.<sup>61</sup> Though the human temple is constructed in baptism, it is not completed in it, but each member of the mystical body of Christ determines the proportion of the divine indwelling through his subsequent life. The difference in inhabitation does not affect God; He remains whole in Himself and wholly present in each individual just soul.<sup>62</sup>

As omnipresence (the *ubique totus* presence) which is commonly associated with God the Creator (a notion appropriated to the Father) is vindicated by St. Augustine for the other divine Persons, so the inhabiting presence associated usually with the Person of the Holy Ghost is expressly defended for the Father and

<sup>57</sup> *Ep.* 187, 5, 15 (PL 33, 837; CSEL 57, IV, 92); 5, 17 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 94).

<sup>58</sup> *Ep.* 187, 12, 18 (PL 33, 847; CSEL 57, IV, 115): ". . . habitat itaque in singulis Deus tamquam in templis suis."

<sup>59</sup> *Enar. in Ps.*, 98, 3 (PL 37, 1260): "Si ergo et tu habendo plenitudinem scientiae, et habendo charitatem, utique sedes Dei factus es, coelum factus es."

<sup>60</sup> L. O. Krupa, *Obraz Boży w Człowieku według Nauki Św. Augustyna* (Lublin: 1948), pp. 155 ff.

<sup>61</sup> *Ep.* 187, 13, 38 (PL 33, 847; CSEL 57, IV, 116); *Ep.* 187, 5, 17 (PL 33, 838; CSEL 57, IV, 94-95): ". . . in quibus habitat, non aequaliter habitat . . . et unde omnibus sanctis sunt aliis alii sanctiores nisi abundantius habendo habitatorem Deum."

<sup>62</sup> *Ep.* 187, 6, 8 (PL 33, 839; CSEL 57, 97).



the Son.<sup>63</sup> As has already been pointed out, the omnipresence of God is expressed in terms of operation in the universe without any explicit assertion that the divine substance or essence is present. In the divine inhabitation of the soul of the just, the abidance of the Holy Spirit in the soul is distinctive, but even here the Holy Spirit is not inert but active.<sup>64</sup>

Besides the indwelling in the individual person, there is also a corporate inhabitation. God dwells in each individual who is justified as in His temple, but again, all just individuals inhabited by the Holy Ghost are united into one body, and constitute a single temple for God's inhabitation.<sup>65</sup> This participation of the Holy Ghost by each individual member and by the entire body may be illustrated by the example of the human body from which the analogy for the mystical body is taken: each cell of the human body has a life in itself, and yet taken all together, they form a body which has a soul—the source of life for the whole. So it is in the mystical body of Christ: each member, sanctified by the grace and charity of God, possesses the indwelling Holy Ghost, and yet this same Spirit is the soul uniting and vivifying the whole, an analogy all can understand.

In St. Augustine's conception, the formation and building of the living temple of God, of Christ's body, is taking place all the time here upon earth, from the time of Abel to the end of time. In describing the construction of this spiritual temple the Bishop is solemn and dramatic. He visualizes the sinful masses of mankind, which through the grace of faith and baptism are incorporated into Christ for the formation of His mystical body and for the construction of the temple of the Holy Ghost. Ever since the sin of disobedience committed by Adam and transmitted to all human nature,<sup>66</sup> men are transferred from the powers of darkness, as from

<sup>63</sup> S. J. Grabowski, "The Holy Ghost in the Mystical Body of Christ according to St. Augustine," *Theological Studies*, V (1944), 478.

<sup>64</sup> *Ep.* 194, 4, 18 (PL 33, 880; CSEL 57, IV, 190): ". . . fatendum est, aliter adjuvat [Spiritus Sanctus] nondum inhabitans, aliter adjuvans. Nam nondum inhabitans adjuvat ut sint fideles, inhabitans adjuvat jam fideles."

<sup>65</sup> *Ep.* 187, 13, 38 (PL 33, 847; CSEL 57, IV, 115): "Habitat itaque in singulis Deus tamquam in templis suis, et in omnibus simul in unum congregatis, tamquam in templo suo."

<sup>66</sup> Cf. N. Merlin, *Saint Augustin et les dogmes du péché originel et de la grâce* (Paris: 1931), pp. 360 ff.

a mass of ruin and damnation, into the kingdom of His Son.<sup>67</sup> Those who do not enter it must be deemed miserable and unfortunate. Their very lives must be considered as death rather than life.<sup>68</sup> For the city, the kingdom, the temple, the body now forming, now building, now growing—not to be consummated and dedicated until the end of time—will remain such for eternity in the abode of God to enjoy His presence for ever.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Col. 1:13.

<sup>68</sup> *Ep.* 187, 12, 35 (PL 33, 845-46; CSEL 57, IV, 113): "Quamobrem Deus qui ubique praesens est, et ubique totus, non in omnibus habitat, sed in eis tantum, quos efficit beatissimum templum suum vel beatissima templa sua, eruens eos a potestate tenebrarum, et transferens in regnum Filii caritatis suae (Col. 1:13), quod incipit a regeneratione. *Ibid.*, 10, 33 (PL 33, 845; CSEL 57, IV, 111): "Proinde in compagem corporis Christi tamquam in vivam structuram templi Dei, quae est ejus Ecclesia, nati homines, non ex operibus justitiae quae facturi sunt, sed renascendo per gratiam transferuntur tamquam de massa ruinae ad aedificii firmamentum. Praeter hoc enim aedificium, quod beatificandum construitur ad aeternam habitationem Dei, vita hominis omnis infelix, et mors est potius appellanda quam vita. Quisquis ergo habitatur a Deo, ne ira Dei maneat super eum ab hoc corpore, ab hoc templo, ab hac nativitate (PL 33, 845; civitate) non erit alienus. Omnis autem non renatus alienus est."

<sup>69</sup> *Ep.* 187, 13, 41 (PL 33, 848; CSEL 56, IV, 118): "Cum vero habitationem ejus cogitas, unitatem cogita congregationemque sanctorum: maxime in coelis, ubi propterea praecipue dicitur habitare, quia ibi fit voluntas ejus perfecta eorum, in quibus habitat, oboedientia; deinde in terra, ubi aedificans habitat domum suam in fine saeculorum dedicandam."

## CHAPTER VIII

### ST. AUGUSTINE, MONIST OR DUALIST

IN the course of an examination of human religious thought, it will be observed that the mind of man, in contemplating the universe and penetrating through it to the Being of all beings, has apprehended the Supreme Being either as one with the universe or as distinctly separate from, and irreconcilable with, it. The former relationship of fusion or identification falls under the name of monism; the latter relationship of division and separation under the name of dualism. Thus already in antiquity there were exponents of monism belonging to the Pythagoric, Eleatic, Heraclitic, Stoic, Platonic, and Neoplatonic schools. Dualism had its representatives among the inhabitants of India, the Persians, Buddhists, Manicheans, Platonists, earlier Neoplatonists, and the Gnostics of the Christian era.

In the Middle Ages, likewise, both systems of religious thought have had their followers. Dualism was spread in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by such Gallic sects as the Cathari, Albigenses, Waldenses.<sup>1</sup> It fell to the part of learned writers to uphold monism. Ushered in by John Scotus Erigena<sup>2</sup> (born between 800 and 815), one of the most learned men of his times, who fell into the errors of the Neoplatonists, it found not a few adherents among

<sup>1</sup> E. Vacandard, *Histoire de saint Bernard* (2me ed., Paris: 1897), II, 212-16; 228-31; *Leben des heiligen Bernhard von Clairvaux* übers. M. Sierp (1898) II, 221 ff., 237 ff. S. R. Maitland, *Facts and Documents Illustrative of the History, Doctrine, and Rites of the Ancient Albigenses and Waldenses* (London: 1832).

<sup>2</sup> M. Cappuyns, *Jean Scott Erigène, sa vie, son oeuvre, sa pensée*, (Univ. Cath. Lovan dis. II, 26; Louvain: 1933); W. Seul, *Die Gotteserkenntnis bei Johannes Scotus Eriugena unter Berücksichtigung ihrer neuplatonischen und augustinischen Elemente* (Bonn: 1932); H. Bett, *Johannes Scotus Erigena: A Study in Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: 1925).

the literary men of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. To these belong: Amaury (Amalric) of Bene, who taught that all things are one and that God constituted the essence of all things; David of Dinant, who made God one with the prime matter from which all corporeal things are made; Giordano Bruno (sixteenth century), who makes God and the universe one and the same thing.<sup>3</sup> Besides these, to be enumerated here are: Witelo, Theodoric, Teutonicus of Vriberg,<sup>4</sup> Berthold of Masburg, Dante, Eckhart,<sup>5</sup> and others.

In more recent times monism has decidedly gained ascendancy over dualism, but it has also been developed into several more variegated and complex forms which can be reduced to three principal categories: 1. Spiritualistic monism, to which belongs a. the ontologistic system of Malebranche, Gioberti, Rosmini, Brownson,<sup>6</sup> etc.; b. the psychologistic system of Kant;<sup>7</sup> c. the logistic system of Fichte, Hegel,<sup>8</sup> and d. the idealistic system of W. James,<sup>9</sup> J. Dewey, G. Howison, F. Schiller, Rashdall, McTaggart, and others,<sup>10</sup> according to which all reality lies in the nature of consciousness, which implies the existence of a spiritual being or person. 2. Materialistic monism,<sup>11</sup> which in our own times is held in high honor in the domain of science as well as in practical life, takes on a dual form: mechanistic, introduced and developed by K. Marx,<sup>12</sup> and biologicistic, maintaining that God and the universe

<sup>3</sup> A. Weber, *History of Philosophy* (New York: 1925), p. 288.

<sup>4</sup> E. Krebs, *Studien über Meister Dietrich genannt von Freiburg* (Freiburg in Br.: 1903).

<sup>5</sup> More recent investigations into the works of the mystic Eckhart find him culpable of many confusing and nebulous expressions relating to the union of man with God through grace but absolve him from any guilt of Neoplatonic pantheism. Cf. F. Pelster, "Ein Gutachten aus dem Eckhart-Prozess in Avignon," *Aus der Geisteswelt des Mittelalters: Festschrift M. Grabmann*, (Münster: 1935), pp. 1099-1124.

<sup>6</sup> B. Farrell, *Orestes Brownson's Approach to the Problem of God* (Washington, D.C.: 1950), pp. 71 ff.

<sup>7</sup> R. Kroners, *Von Kant bis Hegel*, 2 vol. (Tübingen: 1921-24).

<sup>8</sup> T. Skinbüchl, *Das Grundproblem der Hegelschen Philosophie. Darstellung und Würdigung* (Bonn: 1933).

<sup>9</sup> W. James, *A Pluralistic Universe* (New York: 1909), pp. 110, 318.

<sup>10</sup> M. W. Calkins, *The Persistent Problems of Philosophy* (New York: 1908), pp. 411 ff., 417 ff.

<sup>11</sup> G. Bichlmair, "Zum Umbruch im philosophischen Denken," *Schönere Zukunft*, XI (1936), 450-52; 480-81.

<sup>12</sup> G. A. Wetter, *Il materialismo dialettico sovietico* (Turin: 1948).



are organically united.<sup>13</sup> 3. Mixed monism, which combines some form of the first category with some form of the second into another system. These may be classified as a. emanatistic, as developed by Schelling; b. evolutionistic, of which Schopenhauer, Ed. de Hartmann, and Wundt are representatives; c. phenomenistic, as taught by Spinoza<sup>14</sup> and Paulsen, which reduces all reality, in its ultimate analysis, to a complexity of psychic experiences.

After a schematic survey has been presented of the various forms of philosophical thought expressing the relationship of the universe to the Creator, the question now poses itself in reference to St. Augustine: to what category does he belong? He who has written so much on God, the world, the presence of God in the universe, and the relation of the whole of nature to God; who thus continually bears upon the spheres of monism and dualism, could not have avoided those basic problems of cosmology and theism which have throughout the ages confronted the mind of the thinking and speculating man. Judging by his adherence at one time to the dualistic Manicheism, and then in turn to the monistic Plotinianism, and by his penetrating knowledge of the history of the schools of philosophical thought, there can be no doubt that both of these systems of religious philosophy were not something nebulous and distant to the mind of St. Augustine, but definite and real with a fundamental bearing on religion and life. While the terms are modern, their content is as ancient as human thought.

There are some who put St. Augustine in the category of monists;<sup>15</sup> there are others who consider him an exponent of dualism.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> F. Sheen, *God and Intelligence in Modern Philosophy* (London: 1925), pp. 218-41.

<sup>14</sup> P. Siwek, *Spinoza et le Panthéisme religieux* (Paris: 1950), pp. 107-86.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., W. P. Tolley, *The Idea of God in St. Augustine* (New York: 1930), p. 117: "Thus the Augustinian system is perceived to be a pure monism, without, however, any identification of God with the world." And on p. 116: "The charge of metaphysical dualism may, therefore, be regarded as entirely unwarranted and the only dualism that remains is that between living for God and living for self."

<sup>16</sup> Thus, P. E. More, "The Dualism of St. Augustine," *The Hibbert Journal*, VI (1908), 606-22, designates St. Augustine as a dualist on the grounds that a. the world is, as it were, a mixture of being and non-being (*esse* and *nihil*) (p. 615); b. mankind is divided into two camps in the two contrasted cities of the world and God: "yet its very conception shows how radical the sense of dualism was in Augustine's mind and how the Manichean conception of two eternally hostile powers was carried over into the contrasted kingdoms of heaven and earth" (p. 618); c. man's will being different from God's accentu-

Many of these classifications depend on the personal viewpoint of writers or upon their particular conception of monism and dualism. There must be some more generally acceptable and limited signification of the terms, if we are to speak intelligibly to a wider circle of instructed minds.

Let us first make sure of the meaning of our terms in the modern philosophical sense. Monism (the Greek *monon*), as opposed to dualism, maintains that God, who is to be conceived as the prime substance, source-being (*Urwesen*), is absolutely identical in existence and essence with the universe. Dualism may be taken in a twofold sense: first, in the Manichean sense, in which there are two prime principles accounting for the existence of all things and in which there is a ceaseless mythical warfare between the emanations of the Good and the Bad Principle; secondly, in the sense that God is transcendently distinct in existence and essence from the universe of which He is the Creator. Pantheism tries to steer a middle course between monism and dualism: it denies on the one hand an adequate, or at least a transcendental, distinction between God and the universe; it denies on the other hand an adequate identity between the two.<sup>17</sup> In many instances it is very difficult or even impossible to draw a line of demarcation between monism and pantheism, so that the latter is frequently considered as one of the forms of the former.

Was the African Doctor a monist? It is manifest that he was opposed to that form of materialistic monism which in a sense identifies the whole universe with God. The earlier period of Augustine's life is the history of an afflicted soul which only gradually and with difficulty extricated itself from the grossly material conception of God, and the latter part of his life is the history of a soul which struggled with all the powers of his intellectual genius against such a conception so prevalent in his age. The Bishop of Hippo specifically disavows materialistic pantheism when he asserts: "You consider the earth; it is not God."<sup>18</sup> The God of St.

ates a difference of personalities: "God's will became the supreme being, man's will, in so far as it differentiated itself from God's, the voluntary inclination to not-being. He now had a dualism of two personalities, God and man. . . ."

<sup>17</sup> Cf. A. Mitterer, *Einführung in die Philosophie*, II, 2 (Bressanone: 1934), 148.

<sup>18</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 85, 12 (PL 37, 1090).

Augustine is a Spirit and not a body; He is personal; whereas the God of the monist is, for the most part, impersonal. The God of St. Augustine is immanent in the universe, but is other than it; the God of monism does not transcend the universe.<sup>19</sup>

Nor does St. Augustine's teaching on the pre-existence of God as the unique and self-sufficient Being, and as the sole principle of all created being make the doctrine of the African churchman monistic. For in his teaching the world originates from God through creation, and thus remains distinct from Him, and is of a different substance from His; whereas cosmic monism, at least of the Greek philosophers, was inseparable from emanationism, whereby the proceeding creature is of the same substance as the principle from which it emanates. If the term monism were taken to mean that all existing things owe their origin to a single being, to a source-being, so that there was a time when it alone existed, then St. Augustine could be classified as a monist. The ever-existing, necessary, and self-sufficient God of St. Augustine brought the universe into existence by an act of His will and thereby gave inception to time and place. But this conception of monism is one-sided; it merely considers God as the sufficient and infinite source of all being without touching the problem of the relation of the universe as it now exists to God. Is there only a "One" of which the universe is a part, a phase, a manifestation; or are there a "two," the universe and God, and two that would be distinct and separate? For him there are now two distinct beings, not however unrelated. In this sense St. Augustine cannot be designated as a monist.

Nor does the doctrine of the omnipresence of God, whereby He actively penetrates all things constituting the universe, make St. Augustine a disciple of monism. For time and again, precisely when he speaks of God and His active power as penetrating necessarily and immanently all created beings, Augustine takes time out to warn his hearers and readers against considering the things through which God is diffused and operative as a part of God. That is also the reason for his statement that God is within all things and above (or outside of) them: He is within because He

<sup>19</sup> For a summary of pantheistic doctrine cf. F. J. Hall, *The Being and Attributes of God* (New York: 1909), p. 221.

is most intimately present and sustains them; He is above them, because He is not of the same substance as they but transcendent to them. The presence of God in the universe has been presented as dynamic rather than static. The effort and tendency of the Fathers and of St. Augustine has been to remove as much as possible any suspicion of, or inclination towards, identifying God with the universe.

The presence of God in the universe means perfection on the part of God, but involves imperfection and dependence on the part of the universe. While God does not need the universe as a receptacle or a place to be—for He was just the same before it came into existence—the created work of God needs the inbeing of God. It is a postulate of the divine all-perfect nature to be wherever anything is. Thus He is omnipresent to the things that actually are, and through His immensity potentially present to the things that could be. By the very fact that possible things are made actually existent, He becomes actually present to them. On the other hand, it is a postulate of a contingent and mutable being to be supported and preserved in being by the necessary and immutable Being. This is effected by the dynamic presence of the Creator and Preserver. Neither the creative nor the conservative actions of God postulate a oneness in essence between the Creator and His creatures.

Was St. Augustine a dualist? Especially from his *Confessions* it is evident that the description of the inner experiences of St. Augustine are a classical example of the existence of a moral dualism in the sense that in man there is an inner struggle, a twofold drawing in opposite directions, that is, one inclination toward good, and the other toward evil. Original sin and grace are involved in this condition of man. But St. Augustine is no innovator in this matter; he is one of the best exemplars in person and one of the most dramatic exponents of the teaching of St. Paul on the struggle between flesh and the spirit existing in man. Again, especially from his *De Civitate Dei* it is equally evident that Augustine is an ardent and capable exponent of the moral dualism existing in the world, dividing all men into two classes, namely those who are in the pursuit of good and those who are in the pursuit of evil. Those who pertain to God form the City of God, body of Christ; those



who pertain to Satan are said to form his city (*civitas diaboli*, *civitas terrena*), to constitute his body (*corpus diaboli*).<sup>20</sup>

The dualism which is now under consideration is theistic and cosmological, a dualism which determines more accurately the relation of the universe to God. As is evident from what has been said, Augustine was not a dualist in the sense of the Manichean and many similar teachings which admitted a twofold supreme source of existence, the one independent of the other. In this system of religious thought not only the absolute principles are opposed to each other, but also their emanations are disparate and in endless warfare. For God, according to the teaching of St. Augustine, is the absolute fullness of being and thus the sole primeval source of all being.<sup>21</sup> He is not the principle of emanation but the creating cause of the universe, the sustainer of all things in existence, the coactive principle in the production of all motion and action, and a provider of peace, order, and stability in the universe.

There are two fundamental doctrines of St. Augustine which antagonize the basic principles of dualistic systems of the Manichean type. The one doctrine is a condition, viz., that matter is not by its very nature evil as is taken for granted in these dualistic systems. Since matter is something positive and created, it is good in itself and therefore is not opposed by its very nature to the Principle from which it proceeds by creation. The other doctrine is that God alone is fullness of being, so that all being must come from Him and subsist in Him. In order, however, to subsist in Him, it must be permeated by His very power and Being; that is, He must be present to it by His substance and action.

It will be clear from the study thus far made upon the tenets of monism and Manichean dualism that the divine omnipresence is the basic doctrine which is bound up with these systems of philosophico-religious thought. They endeavor to explain the relationship of the universe to God.

If St. Augustine simply cannot be said to be a monist or a dualist

<sup>20</sup> Cf. H. Scholz, *Glaube und Unglaube in der Weltgeschichte. Ein Kommentar zu Augustins 'De civitate Dei'* (Leipzig: 1911); S. J. Grabowski, "Sinners in the Mystical Body of Christ according to St. Augustine," *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947), 655 ff.

<sup>21</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 159); *De Trinit.*, V, 10, 11 (PL 42, 918).

in the strict sense of the word, what is he? His theology and philosophy fall into the middle-of-the-course road between monism and dualism. In a sense his doctrine can be considered monistic. For as a genetic explanation of the universe, it reduces all reality to a single principle, to a sole source-Being, to the will and power of one everlasting and immutable God. Yet it is not monism, as defined and usually accepted, because the God of St. Augustine is distinct from and transcendental to the world which proceeds from Him. It is a dualism in so far as it maintains that God is the self-sufficient and necessary Being which is distinct from creation, and therefore holds for two distinct entities of two diverse substances, namely God and creatures. It is likewise a dualism in this sense, which is Augustinian, that, considering the world as it is now created, all entities in it can be reduced to two ultimate principles of reality, viz., spirit and matter. So much as regards the matter itself. Concerning an appropriate nomenclature, there is no term in St. Augustine nor any single name to this day which would adequately express all these elements. The designation which is used nowadays to signify the doctrine contained in St. Augustine is "cosmological dualism," although it does not adequately signalize all the elements which are essential to his cosmologico-theistic system.

All that was intended in the present chapter was to study St. Augustine's attitude to two systems of philosophical and religious thought of cosmic and perennial significance, viz., monism and dualism. The thought, method, and trend found in St. Augustine will be traced in the Fathers, as much as space permits, and will be likewise briefly observed in some of the more conspicuous and influential pronouncements of the Church. In the following chapter, when treating of pantheism, we shall consider his philosophical principles relative to monism and dualism, but especially to the former.

#### THE FATHERS

In tracing St. Augustine's thought on the presence of God a brief survey will be made of the Latin Fathers who preceded him, who were his contemporaries and who succeeded to his tradition. A single passage dealing with omnipresence will be selected from

each of the several Latin Fathers, and some pre-scholastic writers upon whom the African Bishop exerted a powerful influence. These passages will portray a certain continuity of thought with characteristics of language and content proper to each author. They will, furthermore, present God as being intimately active in the world He created, as preserving it and co-operating with its movements, and yet as being transcendental to it. This was the manner in which they expressed their attitude towards the ever-recurring extremist *Weltanschauung* both of the dualistic and the monistic systems. Finally, they will evince a certain development along Augustinian lines, and will furnish the material to be molded by the Scholastic into his own form.

The language of St. Augustine when treating of the presence of God, is as usual florid, but sober and prosaic. His presentation is not so descriptive as that which occurs in the writings of Fathers before his time, but neither is it as dry as that of the Scholastics, whose style of writing is peculiar to them and devoid of Augustinian elegance of diction. His thought concerning the presence and immensity of God lies rather on the side of the jejune and philosophical, but yet ready for practical life. There has been, already in the patristic age, a trend to portray the presence of God in language which is dignified and sober, but with a touch of the descriptive and poetic.

In the writings of St. Hilary, a forerunner of St. Augustine in Latin tradition and a channel of Greek patristic thought for the Latin world, the doctrine of the all-present God is quite well developed, but the tendency is rather toward the descriptive presentation than the argumentative and philosophical. He writes:

All the heavens are held by the palm of God and the whole earth is contained in His hand. . . .<sup>22</sup> The heaven held in His palm is a throne for God; and the earth, which is contained in His hand, is the footstool of His feet. Lest the extension of a corporeal nature might be understood on the throne and footstool, according to the manner of one seated (whereas His all-comprehensive infinity contains again in the palm and hand that which is for Him a throne and footstool) God is to be recognized in all these kinds of creatures as within them and

<sup>22</sup> These words of St. Hilary are a commentary on Is. 66:1-2: "Thus, saith the Lord: Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool, etc."

outside of them, as being above them and (yet) internal to them—that is, as circumfused and infused in all things. . . . He is whole, containing within Himself and outside of Himself, all things; nor can the infinite Being be absent from all, nor would all things be within Him who is infinite. . . . No one is without God, nor is there any place in God. He is in heaven, in the inner regions, beyond the seas. He is on the inside; He is on the outside. And thus, He has and is had; nor is He in any one and not in all.<sup>23</sup>

St. Jerome was a contemporary of St. Augustine and a first-rate biblical interpreter among ancient exegetes, although he was better at reproducing theology than in recasting and developing it. St. Jerome argues on the divine immensity along similar lines as St. Hilary; his language however is more lucid and his thought more simple and accessible. Commenting on the same words of Isaiah which occasioned the longer discourse on the presence of God in the quoted passage of St. Hilary, St. Jerome says:

If, according to the manner of him who sits on a throne and rules, heaven is His throne, and earth His footstool, how can He be enclosed in a small place, who fills all things, and in whom are all things. . . . God is without and within, infused and circumfused, while He is not enclosed by the surrounding throne He holds by this hand and palm (all things).<sup>24</sup>

To render the historical backgrounds more significant and the chain of doctrine concerning the immensity and omnipresence of God more complete, let us select but a single passage in the same vein from St. Ambrose, who exerted a personal and most direct influence upon the young Augustine. Commenting on the doctrine that all things are in God, he writes:

How can a creature be in God? For God is of a simple nature,—of a nature not joined or composed: to which nothing accedes, but has in His nature only that which is divine: encompassing all things, but never mixed (with them) Himself; penetrating all things but never penetrated Himself: everywhere totally present, at the same time, either in heaven or upon earth, or in the most distant sea. . . .<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> St. Hilary, *De Trinit.*, 1, 6 (PL 10, 29).

<sup>24</sup> St. Jerome, *In Is.*, 66:2 (PL 24, 653). For St. Jerome's place in Christian thought, cf. P. Antin, *Essai sur Saint Jérôme* (Paris: 1951).

<sup>25</sup> *De Fide*, 1, 16, 106 (PL 16, 553; ed. Ballerini, 4, 597): "Quomodo autem creatura in Deo esse potest? Etenim Deus naturae simplicis est, non conjunctae



One passage of St. Augustine will be inserted here for the sake of comparison with the specimens on the presence of God already quoted from the Fathers who preceded the Bishop. It can likewise be compared with passages gleaned from writers who followed in the wake of St. Augustine. The few words of this passage teaching the divine presence and the relationship of the universe to God are indicative of the sobriety of his thought and of the philosophical perspicacity of his mind.

Since He is God . . . He is by an immutable and excellent power both interior to every thing, because all things are in Him, and exterior to every thing, because He is above all things.<sup>26</sup>

In these pregnant words of St. Augustine are contained the fundamental principles upon which the presence of God in the universe and the Augustinian doctrine of dualism are founded. The divine power pervades all things; it is interior (as Augustine says) to all things because they cannot exist unless God's power conserve them in being. In these words the dynamic all-presence of God is forcefully expressed. And yet God is outside of all things; He is exterior (as Augustine again says) to all things. He does not constitute one being with them but transcends the universe. We thus have a mitigated form of dualism: an existence of two disparate beings, the Creator and the creature; the Creator being in Himself, the creature being dependent upon its Creator.

St. Gregory the Great, who "drank deeply" of the works of St. Augustine,<sup>27</sup> follows the descriptive manner of St. Hilary in depicting the immensity and omnipresence of God in a striking but involved passage which synthesizes many traits of St. Augustine's doctrine. He discourses vividly on the dynamic presence almost in poetic fashion.

Because He [God] abides within all things, He [is] outside of all things, He [is] above all things, and within all: and He is above all

*atque compositae: cui nihil accedat, sed solum quod divinum est in natura habeat sua: complens omnia nusquam ipse confusus: penetrans omnia, nusquam ipse penetrandus: ubique totus, eodemque tempore vel in coelo, vel in terris, vel in novissimo maris praesens."*

<sup>26</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 26, 48 (PL 34, 391; CSEL 28, I, 265): "cum sit ipse Deus . . . incommutabili excellentique potentia et interior omni re, quia in ipso sunt omnia, et exterior omni re, quia ipse est super omnia."

<sup>27</sup> *In Ezech.*, Praef. (PL 76, 785).

through power and below through sustaining [them], exterior through immensity and interior through subtility: ruling above, containing below; circumscribing without, penetrating within; nor is He above from one part and below from another, or outside from one part and inside from another: but one and the same sustains by presiding whole everywhere, and presiding by sustaining, penetrating by circumscribing, and circumscribing by penetrating; presiding higher, hence sustaining below; circumscribing exteriorly, hence pervading interiorly: ruling from above without uneasiness, sustaining from below without labor; penetrating interiorly without extenuation, circumscribing exteriorly without extending. He is therefore below and above without place; He is larger without extension, and more subtle without extenuation.<sup>28</sup>

Alcuin (735–804), who was a collector and disseminator of the treasure of Christian knowledge rather than an originator of it, leans heavily on St. Augustine in his doctrinal works. In the matter at hand, we find the doctrinal content of St. Augustine,<sup>29</sup> not without a tendency toward poetical description:

Whatever has the nature of a creature is a creature of God, whose omnipotence governs, rules and fills all those things which it has created. Nor do we say God fills all things, in order that they may contain Him, but that they may be contained by Him. . . . The immensity of His divine greatness is this, that we conceive of Him, to be within all things, but not enclosed; outside of all things but not excluded; He is within in order to contain all things; He is outside, in order that by the immensity of His uncircumscribed magnitude He may encompass all things. By this that He is external to things, is shown that He is the Creator, by this that He is internal to them, is shown that He governs all things. And in order that the things that are created may not be without God, He is within them; that they may not be outside of God, He is exterior to them, thus encompassing them, not by local dimensions, but by a dynamic presence (*potentia praesentia*), because He is everywhere present, and all things are present to Him.<sup>30</sup>

St. Bernard (1090–1153), to whom, in the words of Bossuet, “piety was his all,” had a way all his own of expressing himself on religious truths. He was always zealous, and on that account al-

<sup>28</sup> *Moral.*, II, 12, 20 (PL 75, 565).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. W. Schulz, *Der Einfluss Augustins in der Theologie und Christologie des VIII und IX Jahrhunderts* (Halle: 1913), pp. 60–61.

<sup>30</sup> Alcuin, *De fide Trin.*, II, 4 (PL 101, 25).

ways striking. Just as reason and rationalism had their ardent advocate in Abelard,<sup>31</sup> "a pioneer in the analytic speculative theology,"<sup>32</sup> so Sacred Scripture and tradition had their enthusiastic adherent in St. Bernard, the theologian of the heart. The controversies between these two men,<sup>33</sup> and the tendencies which they reflect "form the greatest episode of the twelfth century." Speaking of the divine omnipresence with imagery, St. Bernard expresses himself thus:

Where is He? What wretch said it? But where is He not? He is higher than heaven, He is lower than the infernal regions. He is wider than the earth, more diffused than the sea. He is nowhere, yet He is everywhere, because He is absent to no place, nor is He encompassed by any place.<sup>34</sup>

In the eleventh century we find this doctrine on the presence of God, as it was delineated by the Fathers and some pre-scholastic writers, cast into poetic form by Hilbertus of Lavarden.<sup>35</sup> The celebrated poet and one of the greatest hymnologists of the Middle Ages caught the spirit of a St. Hilary and a St. Gregory in their description of God. Because this part of the hymn presents the culminating point in the descriptive portrayal of the all-present God in the world, and is at the same time a summation of the attributes in which that divine presence has been described in the patristic age, a free translation of the beautiful Latin verse will be attempted here.

Above all things, under all things,  
Outside of all things, within all things,

<sup>31</sup> Cf. J. Cottiaux, "La conception de la théologie chez Abélard," *Rev. Hist. ecclés.*, XXVIII (1932), 250-69; J. G. Sikes, *Peter Abailard* (Cambridge: 1932); É. Gilson, *La philosophie au moyen âge des origines au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: 1944), pp. 273-96; J. de Ghellinck, *Le mouvement théologique du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (2me ed.; Bruges: 1948), pp. 149 ff.

<sup>32</sup> D. J. B. Hawkins, *A Sketch of Medieval Philosophy* (New York: 1949), p. 48.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. J. de Ghellinck, *op. cit.*, pp. 166 ff.

<sup>34</sup> *Sermones de diversis*, "De quaerendo Deo, et de triplici vinculo quo cohaeremus Deo" (PG 183, 552): "Ubi est? Qui dixit miser? Sed ubi non est. Altior est coelo, inferno profundior, latior terra, mari diffusior, nusquam est et ubique est, quia neque abest ulli, neque ullo capitur loco."

<sup>35</sup> Cf. M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (München: 1911-13) III, (with the co-operation of P. Lehmanns) 643-46; 653-65.

Within all things, but not contained;  
 Outside of all things, but not excluded:  
 Above all things, but not elevated;  
 Beneath all things, but not covered;  
 He is wholly above, presiding;  
 He is wholly beneath, sustaining;  
 He is wholly outside, containing;  
 He is wholly within, filling.  
 Being within, Thou art never pressed,  
 Being outside, Thou art never extended,  
 Being above, Thou art sustained by no one,  
 Being beneath, Thou art fatigued by no thing.<sup>36</sup>

Alpha et  $\omega$ , magne Deus,  
 Heli, heli, Deus meus,  
 Cujus virtus totum posse,  
 Cujus sensus totum nosse,  
 Cujus esse summum bonum,  
 Cujus opus quidquid bonum.  
 Super cuncta, subter cuncta;  
 Extra cuncta, intra cuncta.  
 Intra cuncta, nec inclusus;  
 Extra cuncta, nec exclusus;  
 Super cuncta, nec elatus;  
 Subter cuncta, nec substratus.  
 Super totus, praesidendo;  
 Subter totus, sustinendo;  
 Extra totus, complectendo;  
 Intra totus es implendo.  
 Intra numquam coarctaris,  
 Extra numquam dilataris,  
 Super nullo sustentaris,  
 Subter nullo fatigaris.

Already a contemporary of St. Augustine, the Christian poet Prudentius (348–d. after 405) has written a didactic poem dedicated to the Trinity, and another on the origin of sin. These poems are interesting examples of passionate, glowing abstractions and of precise exposition combined with poetic fantasy.<sup>37</sup> In his Apotheosis, on the dogma of the Trinity, he refers to the presence of God:

At Deus ingens  
 Atque superfusus trans maria, nil habet in se

<sup>36</sup> Hildebertus, "Oratio devotissima ad tres personas sanctissimae Trinitatis" (PL 171, 1411):

<sup>37</sup> P. Lejay, "Prudentius," *Cath. Enc.*, XII, 518.



Extremum, ut claudi valeat, sensuve teneri,  
 Incomprehensa manet virtus, cui linea desit  
 Ultima quam spatium non mensurabile tendit.<sup>38</sup>

Finally St. Prosper, a layman conversant with theology and an enthusiastic follower of St. Augustine, in defense especially of the latter's teaching on grace, is the author of the following verses dedicated to the all-present God.

Ille manet, simul acta tenens et agenda, futuris  
 Ulterior, tum praeterites prior; omnibus unus  
 Praesens; et solus sine tempore tempora condens,  
 Utque aevi spatia, ac numeros praecedit, et exit,  
 Sic nullo immensus cohibetur fine locorum.<sup>39</sup>

#### ST. AUGUSTINE AND THE CHURCH

In rejecting the gross dualism of the Manicheans and the emanatistic monism of the Neoplatonists the African Bishop laid down a general pattern of argumentation for the repudiation of all forms of dualism and monism relative to the conception of God and the universe. Augustinian religious and philosophical thought made a lasting impression upon Catholic tradition in its almost continual struggles with men and sects basing their religious systems on a purely monistic foundation or a strict dualistic principle. That God cannot be rightly conceived of in His nature and attributes by man unless at the same time the true relationship of the universe to Him is understood, is sufficiently attested to by the long history of religious and philosophical thought.

That the Church was not indifferent and its members not unaffected by these struggles of human thought is evidenced by conciliar definitions made on various occasions against the tenets of either dualism or monism. True enough, there is no such action on the part of the Church in its earlier stages when this same matter was agitated with Greek philosophies, Gnostics and religious sects, since the Church was engaged with more burning and fundamental problems. The teaching concerning the three Persons of

<sup>38</sup> *Apoth.*, V, 809 ff (PL 59, 986). One is reminded of Tertullian's sentence on the ubiquity of God in *Adv. Praxean*, 6 (PL 2, 160; CSEL 47, 234): "Deus totum orbem apprehendit velut nidum: cui coelum thronus et terra scabellum: in quo omnis locus, non ipse in loco; qui universalitatis extrema linea est."

<sup>39</sup> *Carmen de Providentia*, V, 175-80 (PL 51, 621).

the Blessed Trinity, the doctrine concerning the two natures and the divine personality of Christ, and the dignity of Mary, the Mother of God, were called into question and shook the foundation of the Church. The very life and nature of the Church depended upon these doctrines, hence the convocation of ecumenical councils to cope with the perils of error, schism, and heresy. In comparison with these pressing needs of the Church for safeguarding and defining doctrines which formed the very core of her faith, dualism and monism constituted a remote and less dangerous threat to unity and belief. Being doctrines that pertained to the intellectuals and the philosophically minded, they were restricted to a limited sphere of influence. Moreover, the Fathers and especially St. Augustine, have sufficiently repudiated such errors through their writings and there was less danger that such tenets should permeate the masses. It was only upon their recurrence in the Middle Ages and in more recent times that the Church has officially taken stand against them.

On three occasions the Church has re-echoed in its ecumenical and solemn definitions the voice of St. Augustine and tradition. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) made a solemn and definitive pronouncement of condemnation against the Albigenses and other heretics, especially in France and Spain, who were given over to Manichean dualism. In its profession of faith known under the name of the chapter *Firmiter* (with which chapter one begins), the Council emphatically states that 1. there is only one true God who is the uncreated principle; it thus excludes the existence of two equally coeternal principles. 2. God is the cause of all things whether they be visible or invisible, spiritual or corporeal. Thus all things, whether they be spirit or matter are good in themselves; otherwise they could not be created by God. 3. Creation has taken place in the strict sense of the word, that is, from nothing (*de nihilo*) and in time (*simul ab initio temporum*). However, using the term *simul* the Council does not reiterate an opinion which was commonly expressed by the Fathers in their commentaries on the hexaemeron, viz., that all things were created *at the same time*. This the Fathers did in falsely explaining the words of Ecclesiasticus, 18:1: "He that liveth for ever, created all things together," according to the Vulgate version: *qui vivit in aeternum, creavit*

*omnia simul*. The *simul* is not to be understood in the sense of time, but of comparison relative to the things created; viz., not in the sense that all things are created at the same time, but that all things, material and immaterial, are equally created by Him. This is the meaning which underlies the scriptural passage, as is evident from the Septuagint version in the Greek. This likewise is the meaning of the words used by the Fourth Lateran Council as can be concluded from the context.<sup>40</sup> 4. The distinction between good and wicked creatures is dependent upon the free will of creatures. The evil spirit was created a good spirit, but by his own perverse will has become evil. Not only has he caused his own fall, but he also endeavors to make men follow his own example by tempting them in this world.<sup>41</sup>

The Council of Florence (1442) in its decree for the Jacobites condemns the Manichean doctrine proper to Syria, the fatherland of the Jacobites. The decree has been drawn up for a particular Church, viz., for the Jacobites who were returning to the unity of the Church, but its dogmatic content is believed to be matter of faith, for it contains that doctrinal matter which is universally accepted as pertaining to revelation.<sup>42</sup> The dualistic doctrine of the Jacobites was blended with Gnostic elements. The decree of the Council asserts that 1. God is the cause of all things through creation in the strict sense, that is, *ex nihilo*; these creatures are material and spiritual. 2. It is not by any necessity of God's nature but by an act of His free will on account of His goodness that all things were brought into existence. 3. All creatures are good because they

<sup>40</sup> L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae* (3ed., Oeniponte: 1940), p. 237. Cf. Col. Lac., VII (*Acta et Decreta Concilii Vaticani*), 1647d; J. Granderath, *Constitutiones Dogmaticae Sacrosancti Concilii Vaticani* (Friburgi Br.: 1892), p. 76.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Florentiae et Parisiis: 1759 sqq.), XII, 982; P. J. Harduin, *Conciliorum collectio regia maxima* (Paris: 1715 sqq.), VII, 15: "Firmiter credimus et simpliciter confitemur quod unus solus et verus Deus . . . unum universorum principium, creator omnium invisibilium et visibilium, spiritualium et corporalium, qui sua omnipotenti virtute simul ab initio temporis utramque de nihilo condidit creaturam, spiritualem et corporalem, angelicam videlicet et mundanam, ac deinde humanam, ex spiritu et corpore constitutam. Diabolus enim et daemones alii a Deo quidem natura creati sunt boni, sed ipsi per se facti sunt mali. Homo vero suggestione diaboli peccavit."

<sup>42</sup> A Straub, *De Ecclesia Christi* (Oeniponte: 1912), p. 482.

come from the highest Good; they are, however, changeable because they were created from nothing; every nature as such is good. Thus the ultimate reason for the defectibility of the human will lies in its metaphysical contingency.<sup>43</sup>

The most detailed survey of erroneous tenets concerning the nature and attributes of God, especially in His relation to the universe, is that contained in the Vatican Council (the third session, April 24, 1870). The errors concerning God the Creator against which errors the doctrine was formulated by the Fathers of the Vatican Council, are expressed in the scheme as prepared by theologians for the Council by two general terms: materialism and pantheism.<sup>44</sup> In the *Constitutio de fide catholica*, it asserts that 1. the one true personal God 2. has created from nothing 3. all things 4. by His omnipotent power and from His goodness 5. for the purpose of manifesting His perfections by imparting and diffusing His goodness. In its description of the nature of God the Vatican Council has much that is in common with the two aforementioned Councils; in fact, it repeats the substantial tenet of the Fourth Lateran Council referring to God, the sole Creator of all things, and leans on the wording of that Council concerning the attributes of God.<sup>45</sup>

The Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church believes and confesses that there is one true and living God, Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, Almighty, Eternal, Immense, Incomprehensible, Infinite in intellect, in will, and in all perfection; who, as being one, sole, absolutely simple and immutable spiritual substance, is to be declared as really and essentially distinct from the world, of supreme beatitude in and from

<sup>43</sup> Mansi, *op. cit.*, XXXI, 1735; Harduin, *op. cit.*, IX, 1023: "[Sacrosancta Romana Ecclesia] Firmissime credit, profitetur et praedicat, unum verum Deum, . . . esse omnium visibilium et invisibilium creatorem: qui quando voluit, bonitate sua universas, tam spirituales quam corporales, condidit creaturas: bonas quidem, quia a summo bono factae sunt, sed mutabiles, quia de nihilo factae sunt, nullamque mali asserit esse naturam, quia omnis natura, in quantum natura est, bona est."

<sup>44</sup> Schema de doctrina catholica, *Col. Lac.* VII, 518d ff.; and also: Relatio etc., *Col. Lac.* VII, 109d ff.: "omnes (errores) aut ex pantheismo aut saltem ex affini ipsius systemate derivantur. . . ." Cf. J. Granderath, *Constitutiones Dogmaticae Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani ex ipsis ejus Actis explicatae et illustratae* (Friburgi Br.; 1892), pp. 11, 75.

<sup>45</sup> ASS 5 (1869), 462; *Col. Lac.*, VII, 248 b.



Himself, and ineffably exalted above all things which exist, or are conceivable, except Himself.

This one only true God, of His own goodness and almighty power, not for the increase or acquirement of His own happiness, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows on creatures, and with absolute freedom of counsel, created out of nothing, 'from the very beginning of time, both the spiritual and the corporeal creature, to wit, the angelical and the mundane, and afterwards the human creature, as partaking, in a sense, of both, consisting of spirit and of body.'<sup>46</sup>

Then in the corresponding Canons<sup>47</sup> attached to the *Constitutio de fide catholica* the Council condemns one by one the prevalent errors of the time and of past history concerning the nature of God especially in relation to the universe:

Canon 1 rejects all forms of teaching denying the one true God, namely, polytheism, false dualism, and atheism; it repudiates likewise any tenet that misrepresents the true relation between God as the Creator and the world as a creature, i.e., pantheism and monism.<sup>48</sup>

"If any one shall deny the One true God, Creator and Lord of things visible and invisible; let him be anathema."

Canon 2 condemns in particular an error of the nineteenth century, that is, materialistic atheism.<sup>49</sup>

"If any one shall not be ashamed to affirm that, except matter, nothing exists; let him be anathema."

Canon 3 is dedicated to the condemnation of the various doctrines which explain God and the universe as being one; it repudiates, therefore, all monistic systems which were widely diffused and in vogue at the time of the Council.<sup>50</sup>

"If any one shall say that the substance and essence of God and of all things are one and the same; let him be anathema."

Canon 4 is devoted to a consideration of the various monistic philosophical systems individually, and condemns each of the following separately: a. emanatistic monism, which holds that corporeal and spiritual, or at least spiritual beings emanated from God;

<sup>46</sup> Tr. in C. Butler, *The Vatican Council* (London: 1936), II, 253 f.

<sup>47</sup> ASS V (1869), 469; *Col. Lac.*, VIII, 255.

<sup>48</sup> C. Butler, *op. cit.*, II, 269.

<sup>49</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>50</sup> *Loc. cit.*

b. phenomenalist or evolutionistic monism, which maintains that all things are merely a manifestation or an evolution of the divinity;  
 c. panlogistic or ontologistic monism, which teaches that God is a universal or indefinite being.<sup>51</sup>

"If any one shall say that finite things, both corporeal and spiritual, or at least spiritual, have emanated from the divine substance; or that the divine essence by the manifestation and evolution of itself becomes all things; or, lastly, that God is universal and indefinite being, which by determining itself constitutes the universality of things, distinct according to genera, species and individuals; let him be anathema."

"If any one confess not that the world, and all things which are contained in it, both spiritual and material, have been, in their whole substance, produced by God out of nothing; or shall say that God created, not by His will, free from all necessity, but by a necessity equal to the necessity whereby He loves Himself; or shall deny that the world was made for the glory of God; let Him be anathema."

Canon 5 deals with the three sources of the errors relative to God and the universe; they are: 1. the ontological source, in so far as the monists identify creatures with God, who is the source of all reality through creation *ex nihilo*; 2. the psychological source, in so far as divine freedom is denied and it is maintained that God created by the necessity of His nature; 3. the ethical source, in so far as it will not be admitted that the end which God has in view by creating is the communication of His goodness to creatures.<sup>52</sup>

The thought and argument of St. Augustine are more discernible in the earlier official pronouncements of the Church than they are in the latest, i.e., of the Vatican Council. This, of course, would be expected. The whole period of the Middle Ages was under the most powerful influence of St. Augustine, as far as theological doctrine was concerned. It was only Albert the Great and St. Thomas who through their writings displaced much of the phi-

<sup>51</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Pohle-Gierens, *Lehrbuch der Dogmatik* (ed. 9, Paderborn: 1936), I, 427 f.; M. Scheeben, *Handbuch der Dogmatik* (Freiburg im Br.: 1927), I, 496 ff.; L. Lercher, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae* (Oeniponte: 1940), II, 199.

losophy of St. Augustine which was Platonic or Neoplatonic in character. Augustine remained, however, the recognized source of theology to these two great scholastic pioneers of Aristotelianism and to all the other Scholastics. Consequently, the trend of reasoning in both the Lateran and Florentine Councils is strongly reminiscent of what St. Augustine has written about God the Creator and the nature of evil.

The Vatican Council was more distant from that period in which Augustine reigned as the prince of theology, and took place at a time when St. Thomas came to the foreground as the beacon light for theologian and philosopher. Moreover, monistic doctrines had taken on new forms by the time of the Vatican Council. But it can be shown, point after point, that what the Fathers have drawn up in their dogmatic constitution *On Faith* in chapter one, on the nature of God the Creator, and in the canons corresponding to this doctrine, has its deepest theological wellsprings in the writings of the African Bishop.<sup>53</sup> It naturally loses some of its distinctiveness after so many centuries, but it is still recognizable as the doctrine for which the Saint contended on a grand scale against the Manichean dualists and the monists of old.

In particular, the Council stresses the doctrine that since God is a spiritual substance which is absolutely simple and immutable, He cannot enter into composition with anything, cannot constitute a part or a soul of the world. And, consequently, He is in reality and essence distinct from the universe. As will be pointed out in the following chapter, the basic attributes by which St. Augustine makes the divine substance transcendental to this world, and which play so important a role in his doctrine on God, are precisely the ones that the Vatican council employs and for the same purpose. They are simplicity, spirituality, and immutability. The proper relationship of the world to God cannot be determined unless the natures of both God and the universe are metaphysically established. This is precisely what St. Augustine did, and thus became in the patristic age the greatest architect of the theology on God

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Abroell, *Die Lehre des vatikanischen Konzils vom Glauben, nachgewiesen aus den Schriften des hl. Augustinus* (Passau: 1872); M. Grabmann, "Augustins Lehre von Glauben und Wissen und ihr Einfluss auf das mittelalterliche Denken" *Aurelius Augustinus* (Köln: 1930), p. 89.

and the great provider of materials to philosophers for their treatises on cosmology.

Thus St. Augustine has become an inexhaustible source of truth and principles not only for the Fathers who succeeded him and to the scholastic philosopher and theologian, but also to councils, which set norms of faith for the whole Catholic world. His influence was felt not only in the many local councils of Africa in and after his time but also in the great and ecumenical councils up to our own times.

#### EXEMPLARY CAUSE

God is present not only in the real order in and through the act of creation, but also in the intentional order through the likeness of things created to the conceptions of the Creator. God does not create without purpose and intelligence, or *irrationabiliter*, to use the phrasing of St. Augustine, but produces all things according to diverse *rationes*, so that the *ratio* according to which man was created differs from that according to which an angel was created. The *ratio* is a pattern, an exemplar, or, still better, an idea because it can belong, in the case of God, only to the intentional order. For God cannot be dependent upon an exemplar taken from nature or elsewhere from outside of Himself, but He must necessarily draw it from His own being. He does not glance outside of Himself in quest of a model, exemplar, or pattern as the artist in order to conceive an exemplary idea, but He intuitively His own essence. This is postulated by His self-sufficiency and by the superexcellence of His perfections. These exemplary ideas participate in the attributes of His divine nature; just as His divine substance is eternal and immutable, so likewise are the *rationes* eternal and immutable. All created things are true because they are ectypes of the unchanging divine ideas.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> *In libro 83 qq.*, q. 46, 2 (PL 40, 30): "Quis audeat dicere Deum irrationabiliter omnia condidisse? Quodsi recte dici vel credi non potest, restat, ut omnia ratione sint condita, nec eadem ratione homo qua equus; hoc enim absurdum est existimare. Singula igitur propriis sunt creata rationibus. Has autem rationes sibi arbitrandum est esse nisi in mente creatoris? Non enim quidquam extra se positum intuetur, ut secundum id constitueret quod constituebat; nam hoc opinari sacrilegum est. Quodsi hae rerum creandarum creaturarumque rationes in divina mente continentur, neque in divina mente quidquam nisi aeternum atque incommutabile potest esse . . . non solum sunt ideae, sed



Commenting on the initial verses of the prologue to the Gospel of St. John,<sup>55</sup> viz., on the words: *Omnia per ipsum facta sunt: et sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est, in ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum*, St. Augustine (as also some other Fathers do) unites the words: *Quod factum est, in ipso vita erat* and explains them as exemplary ideas in God. An artist or an artisan first conceives the object which is to be made, and then makes it. The object then has a twofold existence: one in the mind of the artist or artisan, and by this internal existence it partakes of the life of the soul of its conceiver; the other in the work itself, and in this external and real existence the work cannot be identified with the life of the agent or efficient cause. So it is with God or the creating Word of God. Before things are actually created they pre-exist in the mind of God as ideas or exemplars. Because these ideas are in God, they are identified with the life of God or with God Himself, whereas outside of God they are separate beings and cannot be said to be one and the same with God.

If all that constitutes the universe is created according to the pattern of divine ideas, then there must be some relationship of likeness between the Creator and created beings. In fact without this relationship of creatures as ectypes to the divine essence as their archetype, the universe would cease to be intelligible. Just as the universe cannot exist without being physically related to God, in this that God must be dynamically present in it, so it cannot intelligibly exist without being intentionally related to God in the sense that some likeness of the Creator must exist in the universe.<sup>56</sup>

God, who is the fullness and perfection of being, willed that

*ipsae verae sunt, quia aeternae sunt, et ejusmodi atque incommutabiles manent, quarum participatione fit, ut sit quidquid est, quoquomodo est."*

<sup>55</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr. 1, 17* (PL 35, 1387): "Faber facit arcam. Primo in arte habet arcam. . . . Attendite ergo arcam in arte et arcam in opere. Arca in opere non est vita, arca in arte vita est, quia vivit anima artificis, ubi sunt ista omnia, antequam proferantur. Si ergo, fratres carissimi, quia sapientia Dei, per quam facta sunt omnia, secundum artem continet omnia, antequam fabricet omnia; hinc, quae fiunt per ipsam artem, non continuo vita sunt; sed quidquid factum est, vita in illo est. Terram vides; est in arte terra; coelum vides, est in arte coelum; solem et lunam vides, sunt et ista in arte; sed foris corpora sunt, in arte vita sunt."

<sup>56</sup> E. Gilson, *Introduction a l'étude de Saint Augustin* (2 me éd.; Paris: 1943), pp. 275 ff.

there be through creation other beings. Since He alone is *the* Being they can be beings only by participation. But because created beings are able to participate in the divine Being in various degrees, there is inequality among them and a hierarchical order of essences.<sup>57</sup> Each participation is represented by an idea. All things are participations of divine ideas. Since participation of divine ideas is tantamount to imitation of divine ideas, all created things are expressive of some likeness with God. This likeness may be closer or more distant according to the perfection of the being. In the concrete, that which is said to be beautiful, true, wise, and just is so because it participates in the beauty, truth, wisdom, and justice of God.

In expressing the likeness of God, Augustine distinguishes between the divine Word, the soul, and lower beings. The Word is the highest and most perfect likeness of the Father.<sup>58</sup> An image is essentially a likeness of him from whom it proceeds or of that according to which it is produced. In order that there be an image of someone the very action which causes a thing to be an image must aim and tend to produce the likeness in the image of the exemplar. An image therefore is a likeness but not every likeness is an image.<sup>59</sup> The initial relation of God to Himself by which He expresses perfectly His image in the divine Word is the source and the exemplar of the relations which allow creatures to come into existence and to subsist.<sup>60</sup> In other words, it is possible in the universe to have many images, which represent the divine ideas because there exists the divine Word in virtue of which all that exists can participate in God and imitate Him.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 2 (PL 41, 350): "aliis dedit esse amplius, aliis minus; atque ita naturas essentialium gradibus ordinavit."

<sup>58</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imperf.*, 16, 58 (PL 34, 242): "Unde intelligitur ita Patri esse similem similitudinem suam, ut ejus naturam plenissime perfectissimeque impleat." *De Vera rel.*, 31, 58 (PL 34, 148): "... sola ejus similitudinem a quo esse accepit, implevit."

<sup>59</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imperf.*, 16, 57 (PL 34, 242).

<sup>60</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 10, 11 (PL 42, 931): "tamquam Verbum perfectum, cui non desit aliquid, et ars quaedam omnipotentis atque sapientis Dei, plena omnium rationum viventium incommutabilium; et omnes unum in ea, sicut ipsa unum de uno, cum quo unum."

<sup>61</sup> *De Gen. ad lit., lib. imperf.*, 16, 57 (PL 34, 242): "Quapropter etiam similitudo Dei, per quam facta sunt omnia, proprie dicitur similitudo, quia non participatione alicujus similitudinis similis est, sed ipsa est prima simili-

God is *the* Being. Consequently He is the One, the Beautiful, and the True. He is the universal source of all perfections. In the whole universe there is no being, no perfection which does not find its sufficient reason and its ultimate explanation in God. Although universal creation cannot be explained except by the existence and being of God, it nevertheless is a means at our disposal for knowing God. If the universe is in some measure a likeness of God, it should allow us to discover to some degree the nature of its author. St. Augustine teaches that in creation there are traces or vestiges of the Creator. The eye cannot detect the all-present Spirit but the mind can ascend to Him from these traces and attain some knowledge without the aid of revelation.<sup>62</sup>

St. Augustine shows how man is able to confirm the knowledge of the Trinity from creation, presupposing that He already possesses that knowledge from revelation. His ingenious mind sought out in sensible nature many things which have some kind of a triad in oneness and which could bear testimony to a divine Trinity in unity.<sup>63</sup> Such examples gleaned from visible nature are by no means an image in the strict sense of the term but only vestiges of God, that is, distant and indefinite analogies, but which nevertheless can be more easily grasped because of their sensible character.<sup>64</sup>

A certain distant image of the triune God can be formed from the sensations of the "external man." Let us take, for instance, the sense of sight. In vision we distinguish three terms: the object seen, the seeing of that object, and the attention which holds the view fixed on the object in order that the perception may last. Here are three distinct things: the material object taken in itself is one thing; the form which it impinges on the sensible organ is another; the third is the attention which, appertaining to the sphere of thought, differs from the material object and the sen-

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tudo, cujus participatione similia sunt, quaecunque per illam fecit Deus." Cf. *Retract.*, I, 26 (PL 32, 626); *Sermo*, 2, 8, 9 (PL 38, 32).

<sup>62</sup> E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

<sup>63</sup> *De Trinit.*, XI, 11, 8 (PL 42, 998): "mensura, numerus, pondus;" *De vera rel.*, 7, 13 (PL 34, 129): "unitas, species, ordo;" *Ep.* 11, 3 (PL 33, 76): "esse, forma, manentia;" *De natura boni*, III (PL 42, 553): "modus, species, ordo;" *De div. quaest.*, 83, 18 (PL 40, 15): "quo res constat, quo discernitur, quo congruit." Cf. M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster: 1927), pp. 190-94.

<sup>64</sup> *De Trinit.*, XI, 1, 1 (PL 42, 985).

social organ. The three terms are distinct in themselves but form a single entity of vision.<sup>65</sup> The material object which impresses its form on the senses is comparable to the Father; the form which is impressed on the senses is comparable to the Son; the will which unites the object to the sense is comparable to the Holy Ghost. It can, of course, be pointed out that the analogies drawn from the "external man" are not without their weaknesses.<sup>66</sup>

More accurate analogies are drawn from the "internal man."<sup>67</sup> After difficult and abstract considerations of this doctrinal mystery of Christianity in the first books of his *De Trinitate*, Augustine turns, with a sense of relief, to the human soul in order to seek in it an image of the triune God.<sup>68</sup> In the psychic life of the soul he detects an image of God in this that it has, besides a unity of nature, three distinct and yet simultaneous and equal operations. He distinguishes the one soul into mind, knowledge, and love: *mens, notitia, amor*.<sup>69</sup> Augustine's psychological concepts are under the influence of this theology.<sup>70</sup> On the one hand he considers the soul with its faculties or powers as an integral unit; on the other hand he does not admit a real distinction between the essence of the soul and its faculties,<sup>71</sup> or between the faculties themselves.<sup>72</sup>

In the tenth book of his *De Trinitate*, St. Augustine introduces a new triad in which he believes that he finds the distinction of the trinity and the singleness of unity to serve as an image in man

<sup>65</sup> *De Trinit.*, XI, 2, 5 (PL 42, 987-8).

<sup>66</sup> M. Schmaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-20; E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, 284-85.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. C. Boyer, "L'image de la Trinité, synthèse de la pensée augustinienne," *Gregorianum*, XXVII (1946), 173-99; 333-52.

<sup>68</sup> *De Trinit.*, XV, 6, 10 (PL 42, 1064); ". . . ad ipsius nostrae mentis, secundum quam factus est homo ad imaginem Dei (Gen. 1:27), velut familiarior considerationem, reficiendae laborantis intentionis causa . . . immorati sumus a nono usque ad quartum decimum librum."

<sup>69</sup> *De Trinit.*, IX, 4, 7 (PL 42, 964-65).

<sup>70</sup> Cf. H. Weinand, *Die Gottesidee der Grundzug der Weltanschauung des hl. Augustinus* (Paderborn: 1910), p. 98: "Augustinus hat nicht seine psychologische Begriffe auf Gott angewandt, sondern den Gottesbegriff auf seine Psychologie. Er 'orientiert alles Psychologische von Theologischen aus.'" Cf. also M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster: 1927), p. 264; F. Cayré, *Les sources de l'amour divin* (Paris: 1933), p. 35; L. A. Krupa, *Obraz Boży w Człowieku* (Lublin: 1948), pp. 53-54.

<sup>71</sup> A. Gardeil, *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique* (Paris: 1927), I, 32; M. Schmaus, *op. cit.*, p. 272. L. A. Krupa, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>72</sup> *De Trinit.*, X, 11, 18 (PL 42, 983-84); cf. E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 290.



of the Blessed Trinity. The new combination of terms is memory, understanding, and will.<sup>73</sup> In the previous image of *mens, notitia, amor* one element was lacking, namely that of continuity in knowing and loving whereby the human soul would at every moment be an image of the life of the Trinity.<sup>74</sup> For in the Blessed Trinity there is a ceaseless life in which the Father ever knowing Himself never ceases to beget the Son, and the Son loving Himself mutually with the Father never ceases to spirate the person of the Holy Ghost. The foundation for a similar process in man according to which the soul knows itself and always loves itself Augustine discerns in the memory which the soul has of itself.<sup>75</sup>

The Platonic doctrine of ideas or exemplary causes, fashioned and accommodated by St. Augustine to fit into the body of revealed teachings, was inherited by the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages. St. Bonaventure, who was steeped in Augustinianism, was given over to divine exemplarism in accordance with the teaching of his African master.<sup>76</sup> Bonaventure states that when a philosopher raises himself to God and considers Him as the exemplary cause of all things, he enters into the domain which truly belongs to the philosopher and makes him a true metaphysician.<sup>77</sup>

St. Thomas, too, is an ardent exponent of the same doctrine.<sup>78</sup> Since creatures participate in the divine perfections, they are necessarily assimilated to the divine goodness. This idea of assimilation or resemblance is, in his theology, one of the principal ideas which St. Thomas illustrates in various ways and which he employs to make further deductions.<sup>79</sup> The created works of God,

<sup>73</sup> *De Trinit.*, XV, 3, 5 (PL 42, 1060): "In decimo [libro] hoc idem diligentius subtiliusque tractatum est, atque ad id perductum ut inveniretur in mente evidenter trinitas ejus, in memoria scilicet et intelligentia et voluntate. Cf. A. Gardeil, *op. cit.*, I, 77; II, 281 ff.

<sup>74</sup> *De Trinit.*, XV, 3, 5 (PL 42, 1060).

<sup>75</sup> A. Krupa, *Obraz Bóży w Człowieku* (Lublin: 1948), pp. 72 ff.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. J. M. Bissen, *L'exemplarisme divin selon S. Bonaventure* (Paris: 1929); F. Schwendinger, "Die Erkenntnis in den ewigen Ideen nach der Lehre des hl. Bonaventura," *Franz. Stud.*, XV (1928), 69-95; 193-244.

<sup>77</sup> *In Hexaëm.*, I, 13 (Quaracchi, V, 331) "ut considerat illud esse in ratione omnia exemplantis, cum nullo communicat et verus est metaphysicus. Cf. E. Gilson, *La philosophie de Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: 1924), pp. 142 ff.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. *De verit.*, q. 3, d. 1; *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 15.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *Contra Gentes*, 3, 19; 2, 45; 3, 97; *Comp. theol.*, 101; 102; *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 47, a. 1, ad 3.

especially such creatures as are endowed with reason, manifest in themselves the glory and the love of the Creator. To be a manifestation of the divine perfections and thereby to glorify God belong to the very purpose of their existence.<sup>80</sup> In other words, creatures fulfill their destination by being a multiformed and multi-colored reflection of God's perfection and goodness. It is true that this reflection is only a twilight but as such it is suited for the weak eye of human reason which would otherwise be dazzled by a direct glance at the overpowering light of God.

The teaching on divine exemplarism is found in the works of St. Thomas not only in the form of a well-developed single doctrine, but more as a speculative principle which penetrates and permeates other doctrines. It permits us to view the wonderful harmony and coherence existing between the realm of nature and grace.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, while St. Thomas is rightly said to have adopted Aristotelianism as the philosophical foundation of his theology, he was satisfied to accept some Platonic elements<sup>82</sup> which St. Augustine has woven inextricably into the Christian fabric of doctrine. That is why "pictorial representations of St. Thomas and his intellectual triumph rightly picture him together with Plato and Aristotle, since he made use of the hierarchically constructed cosmos of Aristotle and the eternal ideas of Platonic Augustinianism."<sup>83</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Cf. J. Stüfeler, "Die Lehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin über den Endzweck des Schöpfers und der Schöpfung," *Zeit. f. kath. Theologie* XLI (1917), 656-700; this article has been translated into English by E. F. Sutcliffe, *Why God Created the World or the Purpose of the Creator and Creatures* (1937); P. P. Donnelly, "St. Thomas and the Ultimate Purpose of Creation," *Theol. Stud.*, II (1941), 53-83; *id.*, "The Doctrines of the Vatican Council on the end of Creation," *Theol. Stud.*, IV (1943), 3-33.

<sup>81</sup> F. Dander, "Gottes Bild und Gleichnis in der Schöpfung nach der Lehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin," *Zeit. f. kath. Theologie* LIII (1927), 1-40; 203-47; P. Paluscsak, "Imago Dei in homine," *Xenia Thomistica* (Romae: 1925), II, 119-54; A. Rossi, "Similitudo Dei in creaturis," *Divus Thomas* (Plac.) XXXI (1928), 417-48.

<sup>82</sup> C. Huit, "Les éléments Platoniciens de la doctrine du Saint Thomas," *Revue Thomiste* XIX (1911), 724-66.

<sup>83</sup> H. Meyer, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* tr. by F. Eckhoff (St. Louis: 1946), pp. 19-20.

## CHAPTER IX

### ST. AUGUSTINE AND PANTHEISM

THE doctrine of the immanence of God in the universe is, in some fashion, common to both the thought of the ancient Greek philosophers and the Christian doctrine of ecclesiastical and patristic writers. By the universe is meant the universality of beings, excluding the Supreme Being itself. In fact, the teaching on divine immanence holds a conspicuous place in the works of those Greek philosophers who are reputed to be the founders of a natural theology, and their course of thought has not been without some influence, mostly by opposition, upon the trend of Christian religious thinking. If in the works of the early Greek Fathers frequent references are found to God's inbeing and activity in nature, so that a well rounded theology on the presence of God in the universe can be formulated from them,<sup>1</sup> this has been accomplished in the wake of Greek philosophical thought which has been developing for several centuries. In response to the tenets of the philosophies of the time or to the religious thought which lingered as a consequence of that philosophy, the Fathers developed and established thetically and apologetically their concept of God and His presence in harmony with the teaching of the Books of the Old and New Testament.

Speculation on the presence of God in the universe constitutes the starting point for the religious philosophy of those early Greek thinkers who are looked upon conventionally as natural

<sup>1</sup> From what has been said about the doctrine of the Fathers it is difficult to agree with the following statements made by A. Fuerst, *The Omnipresence of God in Selected Writings between 1220-1270* (Washington, D.C.: 1951), p. 1: "In the first part of the patristic period there are few references to the doctrine of the omnipresence." The doctrine is contained under a terminology that is proper to the Fathers but not to the Scholastics.

scientists.<sup>2</sup> Not only Cicero in his *De natura deorum* but also St. Augustine in his *De Civitate Dei* recognize in these physicists from Thales to Anaxagoras the first theologians.<sup>3</sup> These early Greek thinkers prepared the way for such eminent names as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle who could not but perfect the noble religious elements of philosophy bequeathed to them. Particularly the attainments of reason in the writings of Plato and Aristotle are estimated so highly that their philosophies are used as a rational foundation for revealed doctrine. The attainments of their unaided reason have become candlesticks upon which the light of revelation was put when it was ushered into this world.

For the early Christian Greek Fathers the doctrine on the presence of God forms an epitome of their theology on God and the universe. While there was always a penchant on the part of Greek philosophers, especially of the early schools, to identify their deity with the world in which it is and operates, there is a spontaneous tendency among the Fathers to keep their Christian God distinct from the universe which He creates, most intimately penetrates, sustains, and sets in motion. The first Greek philosophers detect and see God in the universe, but they are unable to raise Him above it. The Fathers also find God in the universe, but they are able to disengage Him from it and elevate Him above creation.

It is seldom that St. Augustine merely touches or skims over some doctrine which is of a universal character and of lasting importance. It was a part of his genius to detect that which affected the thought of man in the past, was of vital interest to man in the past and present, and would continue to influence man's way of thinking in future generations. On this account his theology and philosophy with their principles and solutions to problems are ever vital and fresh, interesting and applicable to practically all times. Through his works St. Augustine continues to live without interruption, as no other uninspired individual in the history of human thought. His philosophical and religious thought

<sup>2</sup> Examples of one-sided emphasis on the physical side of pre-Socratic philosophy is evidenced in such writers as T. Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* (London: 1906), and J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (4th ed., London: 1930).

<sup>3</sup> W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford: 1948), p. 8.



has already lived, without any abatement of interest or influence, for over 1500 years. This in part explains why he has been termed "the most universal Doctor and the most powerful mind the Church has ever possessed."

Bearing these traits of St. Augustine in mind, one must expect to find the Doctor taking up some position relative to pantheism, which error "because so ancient, so enduring, so widespread, among different philosophic schools, is of more than ordinary importance."<sup>4</sup> Not only does the Doctor come in contact with pantheistic tenets of his own day and refute them, but he lays down principles so universal as to be valid just as much in our own day as they were efficacious in his.

Already Thales the Milesian, about whom we receive information and texts from Aristotle, says that "All things are full of gods."<sup>5</sup> This text is variously interpreted by modern philosophers. Hack, combining this text with another passage of the same Thales, which asserts that the first principle of all things is water,<sup>6</sup> identifies divinity with water, and thus makes water the supreme god; he says: "the supreme god, and the cosmogenetic god, are one divine power, Water."<sup>7</sup> Burnet, on the other hand, maintains that "there is no trace of theological speculation" in the words of Thales, and cautions his readers not "to make too much of the saying that all things are full of gods,"<sup>8</sup> for in early Greek philosophy, "this non-religious use of the word *god* is characteristic of the whole period."<sup>9</sup> This statement, in this interpretation, therefore, does not refer to deity in our acceptance of the word, but to the natural and physical element of water, from which all things are formed and to which they return in their dissolution. Jaeger asserts that we can only guess what this Milesian philosopher had in mind. He interprets the apothegm that all things are full of gods in the

<sup>4</sup> N. J. Brosnan, *God Infinite and Reason Concerning the Attributes of God* (New York: 1928), p. 185.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle, *De anima*, I, 5, 411a, line 8, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. R. McKeon (New York: 1941), p. 553.

<sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 3, 983b, lines 20-27, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. R. McKeon (New York: 1941), p. 694.

<sup>7</sup> R. Kenneth Hack, *God in Greek Philosophy to the Time of Socrates* (Princeton: 1932), p. 42.

<sup>8</sup> J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (4th ed.; London: 1930), p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, 14, 50.

sense that they are full of mysterious forces, as being animated by a soul, and consequently "the Oneness of all reality is something alive."<sup>10</sup> The same explanation is given by Freeman, viz., "that the whole Cosmos was a living thing, nourished by the life-giving water of which it was composed, and that each particular object in it was likewise alive."<sup>11</sup> And thus "tradition shows him (Thales) to be a pantheist, seeing the life-force, which he equated with the divine, in the Whole and in every part."<sup>12</sup>

Gilson disagrees with these interpretations. He asserts that "very few words have a more distinctly religious connotation than the word 'god.'"<sup>13</sup> The notion of deity in the works of the philosophers of the fifth century B.C. is a living being, endowed with a will to sway human and earthly destinies. Consequently "it was not easy for a Greek philosopher to deify his universal principle of all things."<sup>14</sup>

Another member of this school, Anaximander, an associate of Thales held that the *arche*, the primary element, is "neither water nor any other of the so-called elements, but a nature different from them and infinite, from which arise all the heavens and worlds within them." It is the *Apeiron*, the Boundless, the substance without limits. To it also all things return in their destruction. "Eternal and ageless" it contains all the worlds.<sup>15</sup>

Aristotle informs us that Xenophanes, the reputed founder of the Eleatic School, referring "to the whole material universe said the One was God."<sup>16</sup> The philosophy of the early Greeks started with nature and in it they detected their deity. It was only later and gradually that they were able to extricate their God from nature and give him a separate being and existence.

The doctrine of the world-soul so widespread among the Greek

<sup>10</sup> W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford: 1948), p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> Kathleen Freeman, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (2 ed.; Oxford: 1949), p. 54.

<sup>12</sup> K. Freeman, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. H. Diels-W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (6 Aufl.; Berlin: 1951), Anaximander, 12 B, I, 89-90; K. Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Oxford: 1948), p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> *Metaphysics*, I, 5, 986b, lines 24-25, *The Basic Writings*, etc., p. 699.

philosophers leads likewise, directly or indirectly, towards a pantheistic conception of the universe. The aforementioned apothegm of Thales that "all things are full of gods" was interpreted by Aristotle himself as originating from the opinion that the "soul is diffused throughout the whole universe."<sup>17</sup> And it was Aristotle, too, who was instrumental in establishing the belief that the doctrine of the world-soul was the teaching of Thales.

That there was such a being as a soul animating the whole universe was the teaching of Plato and, in a large part, of the schools of thought which he activated through his philosophy. Saint Augustine could not but be aware that the process of emanation from the One of Plotinus with its resulting cosmogony was at least in some measure pantheistic, or an approximation to pantheism.<sup>18</sup> Notwithstanding these aberrations of the Platonist, the African Doctor was highly appreciative of Plato and the Neoplatonic philosophers,<sup>19</sup> principally on account of their advancement of the conception of spirit in opposition to matter, and especially because of their lofty conception of a spiritual God, even if they could not extricate Him on a transcendental plane from the universe.

Also the Roman philosophers of the Stoa either neglected their gods as myths or displayed a strong tendency to associate them with nature and its phenomena to the point of identification. Thus they developed a certain physical or natural theology, as if, to use the words of St. Augustine, they were "seeking physics and not theology."<sup>20</sup> This doctrine that God was supposed to be the soul of the world and that the world was His body<sup>21</sup> fitted in very well with the vague Stoic theory that God was a sort of personal principle of reason, or law, permeating the universe.<sup>22</sup> Al-

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, *De anima*, I, 5, 411a, 7, *The Basic Writings*, etc., p. 553: "Certain thinkers say that the soul is intermingled in the whole universe, and it is perhaps for that reason that Thales came to the opinion that all things are full of gods."

<sup>18</sup> Cf. F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 466 f.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee: 1945), pp. 260 f.

<sup>20</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VI, 8, 1 (PL 41, 186; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 261).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 5 (PL 41, 198-99; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 252 f.).

<sup>22</sup> V. J. Bourke, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

though the world-soul was made to approximate a deity in being and operation, or was even implicitly identified with it, it was Cicero,<sup>23</sup> who explicitly identified the world-soul of Thales with God.<sup>24</sup> In any case, early Greek philosophy had as its natural evolution the materialistic pantheism of the Stoics.<sup>25</sup>

These pantheistic trends and doctrines must be borne in mind in order to understand the reaction of St. Augustine and to grasp intelligently his mode of argumentation. If the other materialistic exponents of God are added to the historical array already portrayed, the presentation of the tenets of the adversaries will be complete. Thus, the Manicheans, although a classical example of dualism, nevertheless saw God materially present in all living beings.<sup>26</sup> And, in St. Augustine's own day there were those who were called *Audian*, a group of monks of the fourth century, also known as *Anthropomorphitae*, who conceived of God in the form of man. Their misconception of God was relegated by Epiphanius<sup>27</sup> and St. Augustine<sup>28</sup> to catalogues of heresies which both of these writers had drawn up.

In his care and solicitude to discern God as most present and most active in the world, and yet to distinguish him from the world, St. Augustine follows the course charted for him by the Fathers; their theistic rationalizations and exegetical explanations of revealed doctrine serve him as the groundwork of his speculations on God. He is however more scientific, solid, and comprehensive than the Fathers in his doctrine on God and the divine presence.

In studying the corresponding philosophy on God and His presence in the writings of the early Fathers, it will be observed that they likewise were intent on showing how God pervades the whole universe and its complexity of beings, in order to prove that nothing can be found beyond the reach of God and outside His

<sup>23</sup> *De natura deorum*, I, 25.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. J. Burnet, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50; E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 2, footnote.

<sup>25</sup> E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VII, 11, 17 (PL 34, 361-63; CSEL 28, I, 210). Cf. V. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom*, (Milwaukee: 1945), p. 235.

<sup>27</sup> Epiphanius, *Adv. haer.*, III, 1, Haer. 70 (PG 42, 339 ff.).

<sup>28</sup> *De haeres.*, 50 (PL 42, 39): ". . . Alii vocant anthropomorphitas, quoniam Deum fingunt cogitatione carnali in similitudinem hominis corruptibilis: quod rusticitati eorum tribuit Epiphanius, parcens eis ne dicantur haeretici."



power. They were equally eager to caution that God is not contained in, or encompassed by the things to which He is ever wholly present, as are the deities of the pagans, at least in popular belief. Moreover, God is not inactive or inert as are the same pagan divinities, but He is continually operative in, and concerned about, the universe which proceeded from Him by creation. These are fundamental tenets on God and the universe common to almost all writers of early Christianity who had engaged in polemics with the religious philosophy of the pagans.

Yet the Fathers proceeded still further. Fearing lest their assertions should be mistaken or pressed to the point of identifying God with the universe and the objects to which He is so pervasively present, as happened in the course of the development of the religious thought of Greek philosophers, they were in the habit of cautioning not to confuse the Creator and the creature as if they constituted one entity. While the Creator is necessarily and most intimately present in all creatures through His power and operation, He is not one with the created universe. As a specimen of argumentation of a Greek Father, let us take St. Athanasius who says: "God . . . contains all things but is not contained by any thing; He is in all things by His power and goodness; but He is outside of all things by His proper nature."<sup>29</sup>

The attribute which precluded the possibility of God's entering into any real union or substantial fusion with another spiritual or material substance was His simplicity. Because the divine nature is simple in its being, it cannot be united with another being, whether a spirit, or man, or the universe, to become one with it or a part of it. Although the term "simple" refers primarily to a negation of all intrinsic complexity or composition in God, it was also used to exclude any possibility of a union of God with any substance external to His Being. This rather difficult notion of non-complexity occurs frequently in the writings of the earliest Fathers, becoming one of the first established theological concepts of the intimate nature of God. Its frequent use and exploitation evidences the deep-rooted existence of its opposite, viz., the pantheistic conception of God by Greek philosophers and the anthropomorphic conception of pagan deities, which could not be

<sup>29</sup> *Epistle on the Decrees of the Nicean Synod*, 11 (PG 25, 441).

disengaged from the material universe in which they were located and of which they formed a part.

Thus St. Irenaeus of Lugdunum, writing against Gnostic emanations, inferentially refers to the divine simplicity when he says that God is all thought, all will, all mind; he excludes composition from God and hence affirms the impossibility of an effluence from God.<sup>30</sup> St. Clement of Alexandria asserts that God is absolutely one and indivisible; consequently nothing can be said to be a part of Him either intrinsically or extrinsically.<sup>31</sup> Origen affirms that God is an intellectual, simple nature, not admitting any admixture of foreign being, so that He is a *μονάς* and a *ένάς*.<sup>32</sup> The clear words of St. Basil: "We all confess God to be simple and incomposed"<sup>33</sup> contain a teaching which is common to all the Greek Fathers, and the Greek terms with which he expresses that simplicity, namely *ἀπλοῦς* and *ἀσύνθετος*, became the stock words to convey this basic perfection of God in Greek Christian tradition.<sup>34</sup> Although the terms used to denote simplicity of the divine nature are usually of a negative character, still to the minds of the Fathers they connoted something positive. The most simple Being is a fullness of being, or better, an infinitude of perfection which is not derived from any extraneous source, but which has its fountainhead in God Himself. St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "We [men] are not simple by nature; the divinity, however, which is perfectly simple and not composed, contains in itself all perfection, and nothing is wanting to it."<sup>35</sup>

The two most fundamental doctrines which were decisive in causing the Fathers to draw a line of demarcation between the divine Being and created beings while making the latter entirely dependent upon the former, were drawn not from the domain of reason but from revelation. Thus the Fathers were in a more for-

<sup>30</sup> *Adv. haer.*, I, 12, 2; II, 13, 3 (PG 7, 573, 744).

<sup>31</sup> *Stromata* V, 12, 81, 6 (MG 9, 121; GCS 2, 380).

<sup>32</sup> *Peri Archon* 1, 1, 6 (MG 11, 124; GCS 5, 21).

<sup>33</sup> *Ep.* 8, 2 (MG 32, 248).

<sup>34</sup> Cf., for example, St. Greg. Nys., *Contra Eunom.*, I, 1 (PG 45, 461; ed. Oehler, 1, 159); St. John Chrys., *De Incomprehensibili*, 4, 3 (PG 48, 730); St. Cyril Alexan., *Thesaurus*, 4, 11 (MG 75, 141); *id.*, *De sancta et consubs. Trin.*, dial. 1 (PG 75, 673).

<sup>35</sup> St. Cyril. Alexan., *De sancta et consubs. Trin.*, dial. 1 (PG 75, 673); cf. St. Cyril Hieros., *Cat.* 6, 7 (PG 33, 549).

tunate position, since they inherited from the Bible the most basic notion of God as a Being which is,<sup>36</sup> as One having being and existence all His own, and as the cause, through creation out of nothing, of all material and spiritual beings existing outside of Himself.<sup>37</sup> While Christian thought conceived of God as a self-subsisting Being, absolutely independent of matter, the best of Greek thought was unable to attain the notion of the creation of matter by God, but allowed an eternal existence to both. Hence pagan philosophers could not easily disengage their deities from matter which was equally as eternal as their deities were, or which emanated from and remained, at least to some measure, a part of them. For the Fathers, the universe and matter were so dependent upon God that they had to be created by Him in time and required His most intimate presence; but God, being most perfect and simple, could not be one with them or a part of them. Such is the origin of the difference between Greek and Christian thought on divine immanence.

Such was the well-established patristic tradition when St. Augustine appeared among Christian writers and teachers. While he soon mastered the doctrine of Christian tradition, he was in a better position than his Christian forerunners to evaluate the religious content of previous and contemporary non-Christian philosophies because he was at one time or another, an adherent of the major religions and philosophies of his day. In the matter at issue the African Doctor gives most explicit and most cogent expression to two truths which are evident from all that has been heretofore said; viz., that, on the one hand, God pervades by His power, and consequently also by His very substance, the whole universe and every one of its particles, and that, on the other hand, He is in no way a part of them.

St. Augustine rejected the grosser philosophical theories of the Greeks concerning the divine Being and the universe because they did not make adequate distinction between the Creator and creatures.<sup>38</sup> Such were the tenets of materialistic pantheism. He also parted from the more refined theories in which the supreme Spirit

<sup>36</sup> Exod. 3:14.

<sup>37</sup> Gen. 1:2.

<sup>38</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 30 (PL 40, 219-20; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313). Cf. V. J. Bourke, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

was made to coalesce to some extent and in some fashion with nature. Such were the teachings of those who failed to distinguish sufficiently between God, conceived as a soul, and the universe. Notwithstanding these express emphatic disavowals of pantheism, it is maintained by some<sup>39</sup> that Augustine's concept of God is pantheistic. The only apparent reason which can be advanced for such an assertion is his doctrine on the presence of God in the universe; namely, that through His indispensable presence in the universe and in individual objects He is immanent in it to the extent of being identified with it.

It is true that Augustine does not separate his God from the universe, but nevertheless he adequately distinguishes Him from it. The Bishop makes God immanent in the universe by being active and present in it, but he does not make Him a part of it. His God is transcendental to the universe, and thus He is not of the same substance as the universe, but by nature superior to it and by essence different from it. The existence of God is not merely different from the existence of the universe but is essentially so, as that which eternally subsists in itself differs essentially from that which exists in time and by reason of the subsisting Being.

Commenting upon the words of Jesus Christ in St. John's Gospel viz., "you are from below, I am from above. You are from this world, I am not from this world," St. Augustine says:

How was He from the world, through whom the world was made? All (are) from the world after the world; because first the world, and thus man from the world. Christ however was first, then the world; because before the world (was) Christ, before Christ (was) nothing; because 'in the beginning was the Word: all things have been made by Him' (John 1:1, 3). And thus he was from above. From which "above"? From the air? Far be it. Even the birds fly there. From the heavens which we see? Not even this. There the stars, the sun, and the moon run their course. From the Angels? Do not understand it even in this manner. From which "above" therefore is Christ? From the very Father. Nothing is higher than this God who begot a Son equal to Himself, co-eternal, only-begotten, without time, by whom He created all. Receive Christ, therefore, from above in this wise that you exceed in thought all that is created: all creatures, every body, every created

<sup>39</sup> Such is the opinion of V. Thimme, *Augustins geistige Entwicklung* (Berlin: 1908), p. 194.



spirit, every thing which is in whatsoever manner changeable: excede all.<sup>40</sup>

St. Augustine is emphatic in maintaining that there are two distinct modes of proceeding from God: either through generation, as the Son proceeds in the Trinity, or through creation, as the universe issues forth from God. In the process of generation the Person which proceeds from God (who is thereby constituted the Father) is of the same nature, and consequently equal to the Person from which it issues. The effect which issues from God by an act of creation does not partake of the nature of Him who is the Creator, and consequently is not equal to Him.<sup>41</sup> God, therefore, either generates from Himself unto a likeness of Himself—and this is realized of necessity in the procession of the Persons constituting the Trinity—or produces things out of nothing; and the nature of these created things cannot be in likeness of the divine nature. What proceeds unto a substantial likeness of God is at the same time eternal; whatever proceeds from God as a created product begins to be in time and from matter which was not before.<sup>42</sup> As is evident, the former effect, taken in a broader sense, is and can be only intrinsic to God, whereas the latter effect is by its very nature external to the Creator.

There are, therefore, in God two types of actions: the intra-divine and the extra-divine. The intra-divine actions which are in God, who is one in nature and triune in person, are two: the one by which God the Father expresses Himself, and this action has as its terminus the Word, the second Person of the Trinity; the other action is that of love whereby God the Father and the Son loving themselves have as a terminus of that love the Person of the Holy Ghost. Of these Trinitarian processions St. Augustine has written his monumental work *De Trinitate*, the deepest in all Christian literature. Secondly, there are extra-divine works, belonging to all

<sup>40</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 38, 4 (PL 35, 1677).

<sup>41</sup> *De Gen. contra Manich.*, 1, 2, 4 (PL 34, 175): "haec autem facta sunt; nec ea genuit de se ipso, ut hoc essent quod ipse est: sed ea fecit de nihilo, ut non essent aequalia nec ei a quo facta sunt, nec Filio ejus per quem facta sunt."

<sup>42</sup> *De natura boni*, 26 (PL 42, 559-60; CSEL 25, 867): "Quia ergo Deus omnia, quae non de se genuit, sed per Verbum suum fecit, non de his rebus, quae jam erant, sed de his, quae omnino non erant, hoc est de nihilo fecit. . . . Quod autem non de se, utique de nihilo, non enim erat aliud, unde faceret."

three Persons of the Trinity, which embrace creation and maintenance of the universe, co-operation with created causes and providence. Of these divine operations he writes throughout his works, but perhaps more than elsewhere and *ex professo* in his Commentary on Genesis, *De Genesi ad litteram*. This present treatise deals almost exclusively with those actions which are extra-divine. Since these proceed from the divine essence which is common to all three Persons, they pertain to the three Persons in common.

The Bishop of Hippo makes use of a refined terminology to elucidate this difference between intra-divine processions and extra-divine works. He carefully distinguishes between the procession "from Him" (*ex ipso*) and "of Him" (*de ipso*). The Doctor argues thus: whatever proceeds "of God" can also be said to proceed "from God"; not every effect, however, which is "from Him" can be rightly asserted to be "of Him." Augustine further exemplifies his assertions by stating that the heavens and earth are "from God," because He is the Maker of them; and yet they cannot be justly referred to God as being "of Him," because they are not of His divine substance. Again Augustine clarifies his point by referring to an earthly example of both effects under discussion. In reference to the same man who is the father of a son and the builder of a house, it can be indiscriminately stated that the son is from him and the house is from him (*ex ipso*), and yet only the son can be predicated as being of him (*de ipso*) whereas the house is of wood and earth.<sup>43</sup> The Bishop similarly makes use of such phrases as *ab illo* and *de illo*,<sup>44</sup> then also *de ipso genitam* and *ab ipso factam*.<sup>45</sup>

St. Augustine is as emphatic and persistent in affirming the intimacy of the omnipresence of God in the universe as any of the Fathers who preceded him. Moreover, the expressions which the

<sup>43</sup> *De natura boni*, 27 (PL 42, 560; CSEL 25, 867): " 'Ex ipso' autem non hoc significat quod de ipso. Quod enim de ipso est, potest dici 'ex ipso'; non autem omne, quod 'ex ipso' est, recte dicitur 'de ipso'; ex ipso enim coelum et terra, quia ipse fecit ea, non autem de ipso, quia non de substantia sua. Sicut aliquis homo si gignat filium et faciat domum, ex ipso filius, ex ipso domus, sed filius de ipso, domus de terra et de ligno. Sed hoc quia homo est, qui non potest aliquid etiam de nihilo facere; Deus autem, ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia, non opus habebat aliqua materia, quam ipse non fecerat, adiuvari omnipotentiam suam."

<sup>44</sup> *De natura boni*, 1 (PL 42, 551; CSEL 25, II, 855).

<sup>45</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 15, 3 (PL 41, 365; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 533).

Saint employs to describe the divine immanence in the elements composing the world are as strong as those used by any Greek philosopher. All of the Saint's various modes of expressing himself about the omnipresence of God can be summed up in these two theologico-cosmological principles: 1. "God is in the universe," expressing the divine immensity; and 2. "the universe is in God," signifying the dependency of the created work upon God.

Evidently such dicta can and have been variously interpreted. Their sense must be determined either by the philosophical or theological system of which they are a part, or directly by the express signification of him who uses them. If anyone in Christian antiquity has taken precautions against a misinterpretation of his mind and of Christian tradition in this matter, it is Saint Augustine. His knowledge of the historical backgrounds of Christian thought and the consciousness of his own personal antecedents made him a wary and circumspect champion of Christian doctrine. His frequent and strong protestations against any interpretation of his dicta or mind in the sense that God has being or existence in common with the universe, are a good indication that it was possible to interpret his doctrine in the sense of pantheism. Because he was fully aware of the possible pantheistic and monistic implications of the doctrine of the divine presence and because he took all necessary precautions to be orthodox, Augustine was careful to develop a philosophy and a theology which, as we shall see, are proof that he was able to prove God immanent in the universe and yet transcendent to it.

Language similar to that used by St. Augustine on the relationship of the universe to God continued to be employed down through ages, by the Augustinian Christian as well as the pantheist and monist, each however in his own sense. Long ago attention has been called to the fact that "pantheism is divided into two main forms, the occidental and the oriental. The former merges the world in God; the latter merges God in the world. In that, God is rest; in this, He is motion; there God is being, here He is development, process."<sup>46</sup> Theosophists, too, repudiate the very notion of

<sup>46</sup> C. E. Luthardt, *The Fundamental Truths of Christianity* (Edinburgh: 1873), p. 356; cf. J. Radford Thomson, *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (London: 1887), pp. 282-83.

creation on the grounds that "out of nothing, nothing is made" (*ex nihilo nihil fit*). All things, they argue, proceed from a single, and at the same time, universal principle in such a manner that all creatures are reduced to that single principle, so that God is all and all things are God; or God is in all things and all things are in God.<sup>47</sup> The pantheism of theosophy is one of the many varieties of monistic personal idealism.<sup>48</sup>

It is conspicuous and strange how closely the terminology of such philosophies and religions approximates, in many respects, that of St. Augustine. He likewise makes indiscriminate use of both formulas; viz., that "God is in all things" and that "all things are in God," although at times, as an afterthought, he expresses his preference for the all-things-in-God formula which is significative of the contingency of all things and their absolute dependence on the source of their being. Also for Augustine, God is at the same time rest and motion; in Himself He is immutably what He is, and for the cosmos He is the cause of its motion and development, rest, and stability.<sup>49</sup> And yet the universe, warns St. Augustine,<sup>50</sup> is not in God as His substance.

Nor are we in Him as His substance. . . . Since we are something else than He, we are in Him for no other reason than because He causes it, and this is His work by which He contains all things and by which His "Wisdom reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly,"<sup>51</sup> and through which ordaining "in Him we live, and move, and are."<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Cf. H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*; A. Besant, *Une introduction à la théosophie*; Mainage, *Les principes de la théosophie* (3 ed.; Paris: 1922).

<sup>48</sup> E. R. Hull, *God, Man and Religion* (Bombay: 1914): "The universe is nothing but the thought of the Absolute working through all infinite possibilities by which it can be conditioned and limited and reduced to a finite manifold. The universe exists as an idea in the mind of the Absolute thinker . . . and does not exist outside or apart from that mind. The world is merely God indulging His infinite mental activity by thinking Himself out piecemeal in terms of the finite."

<sup>49</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 18, 34 (PL 34, 309; CSEL 28, I, 117): "Et ideo, dum ipse [Deus] manet in se, quidquid ex illo est retorquet ad se; ut omnis creatura in se habeat naturae suae terminum, quo non sit, quod ipse est; in illo autem quietis locum, quo servet quod ipsa est."

<sup>50</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 23 (PL 34, 305; CSEL 28, I, 109).

<sup>51</sup> Wisd. 8:1.

<sup>52</sup> Acts 17:28.



## SIMPLICITY, SPIRITUALITY, IMMUTABILITY

In the theology and philosophy of St. Augustine there are three prominent concepts that form the gist of his doctrine on God and determine the relation, if any, which can exist between God and the universe. Any one reading the doctrinal works of St. Augustine will easily recognize of what paramount importance is the doctrine involved in the terms "simplicity," "spirituality," and "immutability." The starting-point of these concepts is the material, visible universe from which they are drawn by a process of negation. Beings in the universe are composed, complex: the Being of beings is simple; they are material: It is spiritual; they are mutable: It is immutable. All three terms converge in pointing out one and the same infinite perfection of the nature of God. They also constitute the most fundamental reason why God cannot be confounded with the world of which He is the Creator. In them also lies the reason why the universe can proceed from the Supreme Being only by way of creation and not by effluence.

The notion of simplicity, as already indicated, was common to the earlier Fathers, but none of his predecessors fathomed its full import as did the genius of St. Augustine. He does not explicitly adduce this notion as an argument against the identification of God with created nature, as the Schoolmen have done, but even this can easily be inferred from the fact that he precludes from God by virtue of His simplicity, the more refined and metaphysical compositions. In the language of St. Augustine God is what He has, and therefore *is* and *has*, are identified in God; in opposition to this, man is not what he has, whence *is* and *has* are by no means identifiable in man. Man need not possess the perfections which he actually has, and even what he has he may lose in part or in whole, remaining essentially the same man. Thus the attributes or perfections of man are distinct from his substance, and each perfection is distinct from one another. We are so habituated to thinking in terms of man that it is difficult to adjust our process of cognition to God.<sup>53</sup> The formula of St. Augustine identifying "to have"

<sup>53</sup> *De Trinit.*, VI, 4, 6 (PL 42, 927): "Humano quippe animo non hoc est esse quod est fortem esse, aut prudentem, aut justum aut temperantem: potest enim esse animus, et nullam istarum habere virtutem. Deo autem hoc est esse quod est fortem esse, aut justum esse, aut sapientem esse, et si quid de illa

and "to be" in God, and distinguishing them in men, constitutes one of the factors contributing to the medieval doctrine of the distinction between essence and existence.

There is, of course, a multiplicity of perfections in God, but since *is* is the same as *has* in God, each perfection is God and the cumulation of all perfections is God.<sup>54</sup> Therein lies God's simplicity. There can be no quality or quantity, no change or suffering, no posture or location, no necessity of time or space, since all these signify, postulate, or involve composition and stand in opposition to the simplicity of being.<sup>55</sup> If, to safeguard the insuperable perfection of God, all intrinsic composition, which is natural even to the highest and noblest creatures, is removed from the infinitely perfect Being, a fortiori must all union or composition with the created universe be removed from God.

The theology and philosophy of St. Augustine on God are practically as well developed and advanced as those of the best among the Scholastics. Of course, his thoughts, written on various occasions, far apart, and against diverse adversaries, are not the systematic and methodological treatment of the Schoolmen. The latter, writing approximately a thousand years after the time of St. Augustine, had a better opportunity to evaluate the philosophies upon which revealed thought was constructed; possessed a better survey and perspective of the attainments of the whole patristic age; were not engaged as exclusively as the Fathers in directing their writings against particular errors and adversaries, and established a more precise and extended terminology.

The Schoolmen follow in the footsteps of St. Augustine in determining the relationship that the universe can or cannot have to God on account of the simple nature of God. St. Thomas, expressing himself in Aristotelian form and terminology, presents Augustine's thought more accurately and extensively, and indicates the reason for it. He argues, first, that composition means potentiality of parts; but there can be no potency in a pure act such as God is; secondly, that a composite whole is dependent for its being upon

*simplici multitudine, vel multiplici simplicitate dixeris, quo substantia ejus significetur."*

<sup>54</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 10 (PL 41, 325; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 475); *Ep.* 169 ad Evodium, II, 7 (PL 33, 745).

<sup>55</sup> *De Trinit.*, V, 1, 2 (PL 42, 912).

a uniting cause, but a being *a se* can have no cause. Wherefore he excludes all forms of composition from God;<sup>56</sup> specifically, there is no composition: a. from integrating parts, nor from matter and form, for God is not a body;<sup>57</sup> b. from object and accidents;<sup>58</sup> c. from genus, specific difference, and individuality<sup>59</sup>—wherefore no strict definition can be given of God; d. from individual nature and subsistence; e. from essence and existence.<sup>60</sup> Finally, St. Thomas summarily affirms that the divine Being cannot enter into composition with any other being whatsoever.<sup>61</sup>

The second important concept in the Augustinian doctrine of God is spirituality. Spirituality is not primarily and formally a denial of composition or division in a being, but of materiality; spirit is directly opposed to what St. Augustine consistently calls a body (*corpus*). In some spiritual substances, as for instance the soul, there is found composition. Whatever is not matter, and not dependent upon matter in its being as well as operation is said to be spiritual. Hence not every spiritual being is simple, nor is every simple being (such is the vital principle of a brute) spiritual. However, in the case of the divine substance, absolute simplicity and absolute spirituality converge to the point where they become one.

St. Augustine did not penetrate into the deepest and most exact meaning of spirituality as the Scholastics, especially St. Thomas, later did. That he did not attain its perfect meaning is evident, among other things, from the fact that he remained doubtful<sup>62</sup> to the very end of his days whether the human soul was not generated as a spiritual particle separated from the soul of the parents and united with the body of which they are the authors. When Augustine defines God as a certain supreme Spirit (*spiritus quidam supremus*),<sup>63</sup> he expressly extols the infinite subtlety and excellence of the divine Being not only over all gross matter but also over all other created spirits, be they angels or the human soul; more-

<sup>56</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 3, a. 7; *Contra Gen.*, I, 18.

<sup>57</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 3, a. 1 and 2; *Contra Gent.*, I, 17, 20.

<sup>58</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 3, a. 6; *Contra Gent.*, I, 23.

<sup>59</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 3, a. 3 and 5; *Contra Gent.*, I, 21, 24, 25.

<sup>60</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 3, a. 4; *Contra Gent.*, I, 22.

<sup>61</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 3, a. 8; *Contra Gent.*, I, 26 ff.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. *De Gen. ad lit.*, X, 20, 36 (PL 34, 426; CSEL 28, I, 322-23); *De orig. animae*, I, 16, 26 (PL 44, 489).

<sup>63</sup> *In lo. Ev. tr.* XIII, 6 (PL 35, 1546).

over, he also implicitly involves the other perfections of God, such as life, intellectuality, volition, which are considered by him as necessarily inherent in such a perfect spirit.

If St. Augustine appears at times overemphatic and overduly repetitious in referring to the spirituality of God and in treating it in his various works, justification for this fact will be found in his personal religious experiences and in the historical background of his times. His first impressions of deities, gained from the pagan world surrounding him, were of a material type. In these impressions he was later corroborated and abetted by his associations with the intellectual and religious trends of the day. Consequently, the transition from a material being, which he considered as supreme to the spiritual Supreme Being, was a most difficult task for Augustine. But once the notion of a pure spirit was apprehended by him, it became not only a source of joy but also one of the fundamental concepts in his doctrine of God.

Immutability, the third of these concepts which form the core of St. Augustine's theology on God, is perhaps the most frequent, conspicuous, and forceful attribute ascribed to God in the writings of St. Augustine. In the *Confessions* the African Saint prayerfully exclaims: "Lord, who art not at one time one thing and at another, another thing, but the Self-same, and the Self-same, and the Self-same. . . ." <sup>64</sup> This attribute is basic because it was the starting-point of all speculations on God for those who had to rely on reason, and reason alone. From an observation of constant mutability in nature, the mind of the philosopher seeking God in the universe had to conclude to the opposite of change, viz., to the perfection of immutability, through which the God of nature would be characterized.

For Plato as well as Augustine, true reality lies in that which is immutable, intelligible, necessary, and immaterial. The basis for their assertions is this reasoning: Material and sensible things cannot be said to exist truly, because they are ever in the process of change, and ceaselessly changing they cannot be known, since our

<sup>64</sup> XII, 7 (PL 32, 828). E. B. Pusey, *Confessions* (London: 1945), p. 281, translates it in the following manner: "Thou, therefore. Lord Who art not one in one place and otherwise in another, but the Self-same, and the Self-same, and the Self-same. . . ."



knowledge which has been gained of them in one instant no longer corresponds to them in another instant. For Plato the eternal, immutable, and intelligible realities were Ideas. Among the Ideas, there was one Idea which dominated over all the others. That was the Idea of Good. Although many identify this Platonic Idea of Good with God, Plato himself seems never expressly to have made this identification.<sup>65</sup>

As for St. Augustine, the eternal, immutable, and necessary reality is God Himself. "Being," he says, "is a name of unchangeableness. All things which change cease to be what they were, and they begin to be what they were not. True being, genuine being, authentic being has only He who does not change."<sup>66</sup> Likewise the "Highest Good" (*Summum Bonum*) of Augustine is God Himself, and therefore it is an immutable good; wherefore it is a personal Being which is eternal and immutable. There exist, of course, other goods, but they are not altogether independent beings but are participations of the *Summum Bonum*, and as such are not without a beginning.<sup>67</sup>

St. Augustine excludes all changeableness from God: physical, intellectual, and moral. There can be no change through the acquisition, increase, diminution, or loss of any physical reality. God is so perfect, self-sufficient, and necessary that He can suffer no change in His divine substance. Nor can there be any change of the moral or intentional order in God. As for the divine intellect, the change would consist either in the acquisition of new knowledge or the correction of that which it already possesses; but God is all-knowing, embracing whatever is knowable, and that from all eternity. As for the divine will, there is no reversal of decision, nor any new decision; there is but a single divine act of the will, and that eternal, attaining whatever is to be accomplished. There is no change in God from rest to work, or from work to rest. He eternally rests, and eternally creates, and administers creation. He

<sup>65</sup> E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), pp. 25 ff.

<sup>66</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VII, 30 (PL 41, 219; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 313).

<sup>67</sup> *De natura boni*, I (PL 42, 551; CSEL 25, II, 855): "Summum bonum, quo superius non est, Deus est; ac per hoc incommutabile bonum; ideo vere aeternum et vere immortale. Cetera omnia bona nonnisi ab illo sunt, sed non de illo. De illo enim quod est, hoc quod ipse est; ab illo autem quae facta sunt, non sunt quod ipse."

is able to call a new creature or all creatures into existence in time, and yet the act of the will whereby creatures begin to exist is eternal.<sup>68</sup>

As previously stated, these attributes ascribed to God are very closely correlated. Thus the attribute of immutability is bound up with that of simplicity: the divine nature is absolutely immutable because it is absolutely simple. Changeableness is proper only to beings composed of parts, be they metaphysical or physical, and basically consists in combining or dividing these parts; but there is no composition, and no division of any kind in God. As for spirituality, the Bishop of Hippo differentiates between the mutably spiritual and the immutably spiritual. In the human soul which is spiritual but mutable, there is not pure vitality and actuality, but there is potentiality. The soul is in a static condition, a state of potency and passes into activity. The intellect, for instance, is asleep or devoid of thought; it then conceives a thought and is rendered active. Such condition of the soul is an evidence of its composition. There is also such potentiality in pure spiritual substances as angels. In the Supreme Spirit there is no such mutability: in Him there is no potentiality; He, as a most perfect spirit, is actually in possession of every perfection. And thus the three attributes which play such an important role in the philosophy and theology of St. Augustine ever involve each other, and more than that: although they have a different *terminus a quo* they are identified in their *terminus ad quem*.

It is evident, therefore, from the theology of these three terms

<sup>68</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XII, 17, 2 (PL 41, 367; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 538). "Nobis autem fas non est credere, aliter Deum affici, cum vacat, aliter cum operatur: quia nec affici dicendus est, tanquam in ejus natura fiat aliquid, quod non ante fuerit. Patitur quippe, qui afficitur, et mutabile est omne quod aliquid patitur. Non itaque in ejus vacatione cogitetur ignavia, desidia, inertia; sicut nec in ejus opere labor, conatus, industria. Novit quiescens agere, et agens quiescere. Potest ad opus novum, non novum, sed sempiternum adhibere consilium; nec poenitendo quia prius cessaverat, coepit facere quod non fecerat. Sed et si prius cessavit, et posterius operatus est (quod nescio quemadmodum ab homine possit intelligi), hoc procul dubio quod dicitur, prius et posterius, in rebus prius non existentibus et posterius existentibus fuit. In illo autem non alteram praecedentem altera subsequens mutavit aut abstulit voluntatem, sed una eademque sempiterna et immutabili voluntate res quas condidit, et ut prius non essent egit, quandiu non fuerunt, et ut posterius essent, quando esse coeperunt."

that God cannot be identified with the universe, nor can the universe constitute any part of God. Any one of these attributes is sufficient to safeguard the divine transcendence, but with all three attributes being verified in God, there is the added force of a triple factor or reason.

By way of summary, the gist of St. Augustine's thought, based upon these fundamental terms, can be formulated in this plain argumentative form; God is simple; therefore He cannot be united with another being; God is a pure Spirit; therefore the universe is not of His nature; God is immutable; therefore the everchanging universe is not one with Him; God is necessary; therefore the world is not of His substance. In other words, God and the universe belong to different categories of being. Although the human soul participates, to a greater degree than material entities, in these attributes of God, and therefore approaches in likeness to God, it likewise is not a part of God but a creature of God.<sup>69</sup> To use the Bishop's expressions, it is not a *pars Dei* but an *imago Dei*.

The divine perfections of spirituality, simplicity, and immutability not only determine the relation of the universe to God, but are also expressive of the mode of God's presence in the universe and in all objects constituting it. He is indivisibly and immutably totally in the whole universe (*totus in toto*) and totally in every part of the universe (*totus in qualibet parte*). Because the divine nature is a Spirit of the highest perfection, that is to say, a simple and immutable Spirit, He can be most intimately present to the products of His creation, He can permeate their essences, He can sustain their substances, He can stimulate and lend action to their activities and movements; not only without becoming a part of their being, but also without being touched by their grossness or imperfection or affected by the ceaseless mutations of nature. For the same reason the moral evils and imperfections existing in the universe do not defile the omnipresent and all-sustaining God. He is incorruptible, undefilable, and inviolable.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *De mor. Manich.*, XI, 21-24; cf. W. P. Tolley, *The Idea of God in the Philosophy of St. Augustine* (New York: 1930), p. 101.

<sup>70</sup> *De natura boni*, 29 (PL 42, 560; CSEL 25, II, 869): "Nec tamen, cum in Deo sint universa, quae condidit, inquinant eum, qui peccant, de cujus sapientia dicitur: . . . oportet enim, ut sicut Deum incorruptibilem et incommutabilem, ita consequenter etiam incoinquinabilem credamus."

## ONTOLOGISM

The approaches to the identification of God with the universe are twofold: cosmological and epistemological. While the former were more common to the Greek and Roman philosophers, the latter are more widespread in the philosophies of the recent past and contemporary times. It is evident that St. Augustine, on many occasions, explicitly denies any identification of God with the universe, when his dicta relative to God's presence in the universe would seem to imply such identification, or could be construed as such. With cognizance and deliberation he thus steers clear of any cosmological pantheism, although his God is engaged most intimately in the universe. He has, however, not infrequently been interpreted as an exponent of various forms of ontologism, and thus brought within the sphere of ideal, spiritual, or epistemological pantheism.

Those who, within the Catholic fold have been accused, in the past centuries, of ontologism, and consequently also of pantheism, tried to vindicate themselves by alleging that they were following in the footsteps of St. Augustine, St. Anselm of Canterbury, and St. Bonaventure. They frequently pointed out that the terminology which they employed is identical with that found in the works of St. Augustine, and they insinuate or expressly state that their doctrine coincides with that of the African Doctor of the Church. Thus Malebranche, in self-defense against pantheistic accusations, maintains that, according to the teaching of Spinoza God is in the universe (and hence the doctrine is pantheistic), but according to his own teaching the universe is in God, and that, therefore, he himself evades the taint of pantheism.<sup>71</sup> This latter mode of expression is the one for which St. Augustine expresses his preference.

In the Vatican Council there was a persuasion among some of its members that in teaching that God is "really and essentially distinct from the world" <sup>72</sup> and in proscribing pantheism, the Coun-

<sup>71</sup> A. Ferland, *Commentarius in Summam D. Thomae* (Montreal: 1943), p. 37.

<sup>72</sup> ASS, 5 (1869), 462; Col. Lac., VIII, 248b: "re et essentia a mundo distinctus."



cil was by the same token condemning ontologism.<sup>73</sup> It appears more likely, however, that ontologism was not directly and formally condemned by the Council, but only virtually, since ontologism did not explicitly deny any distinction between the world and God, but did so only in effect.<sup>74</sup>

Let us but glance at the ways in which ontologists try to justify their claims. They will argue thus: that being which the human mind perceives and grasps in all things and without the aid of which it cannot understand anything, is the very divine Being. God—to use their own principle—is seen under the aspect of being (*esse*), which we apprehend in all things and without which we can know nothing (*quod in omnibus, et sine quo nihil intelligimus*). It will be counterargued, however, that the being which is grasped in all things, is an indeterminate, abstract being (*ens*), which is identically the same in all existing entities. Hence, if the tenets of ontologism were to be admitted, God would be present in all things in such a manner as to be identical with them. The teaching of the Eleatic philosopher Parmenides would, therefore, be reinstated; viz., “all things are being; but being is one; hence all things are one.”<sup>75</sup>

Such argumentation does not find corroboration in the writings of St. Augustine, who does not confuse the divine Being with the objective notion of abstract being. The idea of God, in the mind of the African Bishop, is most determinate and unique as representing a Being that is infinitely perfect, and thereby most distinct from all other beings, which are, by the very fact that they are created, both limited and imperfect. It is a concept so real, vital, and inspiring as to dominate his thoughts, will, and life. Following in the footsteps of Plato and Plotinus, Augustine frequently expresses the attributes of God by negative formulas and expressions,

<sup>73</sup> Cf. “Relatio,” etc., *Col. Lac.*, 85d ff. where Archbishop Simor makes the remark that by these words the ontologists, too, have been condemned—the ontologists “qui nempe docent, quod universa per se considerata non differant ab ipso Deo, et quos sacrae Inquisitionis Officium die 4 Septembris a. 1861 condemnavit.”

<sup>74</sup> T. Grandérath, *Constitutiones Dogmaticae Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani* (Freiburg in Br.: 1892), p. 38, n. 4; p. 75, n. 1.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), pp. 48 ff.; K. Freeman, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (2 ed.; Oxford: 1949), p. 149.

in order to distinguish God from created beings and attributes drawn from creation. Through His fullness and primatialness of being, and by His immutable and simple nature, God is in a category all by Himself. The predicates which we attribute in common to Him and to His mutable and composed creatures who merely participate in His Being are not true of each in the same sense. When we predicate being of God and creatures it is true of God in the proper sense, whereas it is true of creatures in an analogous sense. This scholastic doctrine has its roots in the theology of St. Augustine.

Again, in somewhat different form, the ontologist will argue that things have no intelligibility in themselves but in God alone. Furthermore, the intelligibility of things is nothing else but their reality. Hence existing things have no reality in themselves, but their reality is in God Himself. Thus ontologism arrives at a pantheistic conclusion which identifies God with the universality of created things. For St. Augustine truth, in the logical sense, is that which corresponds in judgment to "that which is" in reality.<sup>76</sup> Truth, therefore, is the affirmation of that which is, and falsity is the affirmation of that which is not, or the denial of that which is.<sup>77</sup> Truth, in the metaphysical sense, is also "that which is" but inasmuch as it is a resemblance of the Being which *is* in the true and full sense, an eternal and unchangeable Being. In proportion as finite beings approach to, or depart from likeness to this Being, the degree of their reality is determined.<sup>78</sup>

Thus, in the epistemology of St. Augustine, the necessary and unchangeable being of God is a metaphysically necessary prerequisite for the intelligibility of all things or the attainment of truth. But it is not the being of God which is directly attained or intuited in every act of cognition and in the intelligibility of every object. Things themselves become intelligible on account of their resemblance, infinitely distant though it be, with the first reality.<sup>79</sup> In this sense truth becomes synonymous with Pure Being, or God. Since God alone truly is, He is the ground of all reality and truth.

<sup>76</sup> *De vera religione*, 36, 66 (PL 34, 151); cf. C. Boyer, *L'idée de vérité dans la philosophie de Saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1941), p. 10.

<sup>77</sup> *Solil.*, II, 15, 29 (PL 32, 898); II, 10, 18 (PL 32, 893).

<sup>78</sup> *Solil.*, II, 5, 8 (PL 32, 889).

<sup>79</sup> Cf. C. Boyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13.

Thus all human knowledge and the attainment of truth presuppose the existence of God, for all things are real in so far as they are like God.<sup>80</sup>

Ontologists will press this point still further. It is God, they say, in whom and through whom all things are made intelligible. He is the intelligible light of the human mind. Just as the sun is the natural and necessary light for the human eye and must have contact with that eye in order that man may see, so too God is the necessary light for the intellect and must be united with it in order that it may comprehend. Accordingly, the ontologist arrives at the necessity of making God not only a condition of knowledge but also a prerequisite so as to make Him pertain to the very essence of the human soul. It has already been shown that the soul is not a part of God, nor is God intuited by the human intellect. Human reason is able to ascend from a consideration of the macrocosm and microcosm to the Creator by virtue of the light of reason. Augustinian proofs for the existence of God, are, in good part, based on this principle. This is evident from a glance at the theistic arguments which are sufficiently stated in his works, although not developed and formulated as they have been in Scholasticism. He has sketched the following proofs: 1. eudemonical,<sup>81</sup> 2. teleological,<sup>82</sup> 3. ethnological,<sup>83</sup> 4. cosmological.<sup>84</sup>

While St. Augustine makes use of contingent and mutable beings in ascending to a necessary and immutable Being, he prefers to reach God through the existence of those immutable truths which the human intellect is capable of attaining in this life. Perceiving the existence of eternal and immutable truths which cannot be based upon the existing order of contingent beings, the mind naturally ascends to God, who alone can be the unchangeable, eternal source and foundation for these truths.<sup>85</sup> In order to render these truths intelligible God bestows a light upon each soul; <sup>86</sup> it is not,

<sup>80</sup> W. P. Tolley, *The Idea of God in the Philosophy of St. Augustine* (New York: 1930), p. 36.

<sup>81</sup> *De beata vita*, 2, 11, f. (PL 32, 965 f.).

<sup>82</sup> *Sermo* 141, 2, 2 (PL 38, 776).

<sup>83</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 106, 4 (PL 35, 1910).

<sup>84</sup> *Confess.*, XI, 4 (PL 32, 811).

<sup>85</sup> *De lib. arb.*, II, 12, 33 f. (PL 32, 1259 f.).

<sup>86</sup> *De Trinit.*, IX, 7, 12 (PL 42, 967); *ibid.*, XII, 2, 2 (PL 42, 999).

however, an immediate vision of God that is arrived at—as most patrons of intuitionism and ontologism maintain—but a mediate and indirect knowledge of the nature of God.

The question of the manner in which the human mind arrives at a knowledge of God has been associated by many, especially the ontologists, with the Saint's theory of knowledge. The so-called Augustinian theory of illumination has been handed down to our own times as a problem ever since the Middle Ages.<sup>87</sup> Ontologists of every age and every type have exploited this theory to their own ends. In fact, it is claimed by exponents of ontologism, that St. Augustine is their main support, and indeed a great authority he would be if one could with certainty establish his view on the matter. Notwithstanding the numerous studies on this topic in the last thirty years, we are as far away as ever from any agreement as to the exact meaning of St. Augustine's teaching—or, to put it in more concrete words, whether the theory of cognition of St. Augustine can be made to harmonize with that of St. Thomas, or whether they are irreconcilable on account of diverse metaphysical bases.

It would be out of place to elaborate upon the complex matter here, but a sketchy survey of opinion will help to elucidate the dissonance of interpretation. To enumerate only the most recent exponents of the mind of St. Augustine, and to present the matter in the stage as it is found today, the matter can be schematically portrayed by classifying the authors into three categories:

1. There are those who maintain that St. Augustine's theory of illumination is irreconcilable with the Aristotelico-thomistic theory. Among such are E. Gilson, who is convinced that St. Thomas repudiated the theory of St. Augustine.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Cf. B. Jansen, "Der Kampf um Augustinus in dreizehnten Jahrhundert," *Stimmen der Zeit*, CXI (1926), 91 ff.; *id.*, "Quomodo Divi Augustini theoria illuminationis saeculo decimo tertio concepta sit," *Gregorianum*, XI (1930), 146-48; F. Ehrle, "Der Augustinismus und der Aristotelismus in der Scholastik gegen Ende des XIII Jahrhundert," *Archiv für Literatur und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters*, V (1889), 603-35; E. Życzkowski, "Dzisiejszy Stan Badań nad Augustyńską Teorią Oświecenia," *Przegląd Teologiczny*, II (1930), 475-90; Portalic, "Augustin," *Dict. de Théol. Cath.*, I, 2509.

<sup>88</sup> E. Gilson, "Pourquoi saint Thomas a critiqué saint Augustin," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* (1926-27), 318; *id.*, *Introduction à l'étude de saint Augustine* (2me éd.; Paris: 1943), pp. 103 ff.



2. There are others, as C. Boyer,<sup>89</sup> and J. Sestili,<sup>90</sup> who maintain that the theory of knowledge, as it is gleaned from St. Augustine and as it is expounded by St. Thomas, can be reduced to common essentials. Of course, they say, the technique of presentation and the terminology must be expected to differ in so far as the thought and expression of St. Augustine follow along the lines of Plato, whereas that of St. Thomas is of Aristotelian origin.

3. There are others, again, as M. Grabmann, who are more moderate and less categorical in making St. Augustine and St. Thomas stand apart and in claiming their theories to be disparate. While Grabmann maintains that the teaching of St. Thomas is apparently opposed ("allem Anschein nach") to the theory of St. Augustine and of the Franciscan School in the Middle Ages,<sup>91</sup> nevertheless the epistemological structure of St. Thomas is a synthesis of St. Augustine and Aristotle.<sup>92</sup>

According to the most frequently occurring interpretation of the Augustinian theory of illumination, the light of natural reason is not sufficient to attain even certain natural knowledge, but an immediate contact with the eternal, divine Intellect—with the *rationes aeternae*—is necessary. The *rationes aeternae* are not di-

<sup>89</sup> C. Boyer, "Saint Thomas et saint Augustin d'après M. Gilson," *Gregorianum* VIII (1927), 106-10; *id.*, "La philosophie augustinienne ignore-t-elle l'abstraction?" *Nouvelle Revue théologique* LVII (1930), 817; *id.*, *Essais sur la Doctrine de saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1932), pp. 138 ff.

<sup>90</sup> J. Sestili, "Thomae Aquinatis cum Augustino de illuminatione concordia," *Divus Thomas* XXXI (1928), 50-82; *id.*, "Utrum Deus moveat immediate intellectum creatum," *Xenia Thomistica* (Romae: 1925), II, 155-85.

<sup>91</sup> M. Grabmann, *Der göttliche Grund menschlicher Wahrheitserkenntnis nach Augustinus und Thomas von Aquin: Forschungen über die Augustinische Illuminationstheorie und ihre Beurteilung durch den hl. Thomas von Aquin* (Münster: 1924), pp. 57 ff.; *id.*, *Die theologische Erkenntnis- und Einleitungslehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin* (Freiburg in der Schwiez: 1948), pp. 47 f.

<sup>92</sup> M. Grabmann, *Der göttliche*, etc., p. 71: "So hat denn Thomas die augustinische Lehre von der cognitio in rationibus aeternis in ihrem grossen Grundgedanken der Berührung göttlicher und Menschlicher Wahrheit bei unserem geistigen Erkennen herübergenommen und mit der aristotelischen Lehre von intellectus agens und den ersten Prinzipien verbunden und in selbständigen Weiterdenken der schwer fassbaren augustinischen Illuminationstheorie eine klare und durchsichtige Form oder besser Umformung verliehen." Cf. also *id.*, *Die theologische*, etc., pp. 50 f.; *id.*, *Acta hebdomadae augustinianae-thomisticae ab Academia Rom. S. Thomae Aq. indictae* (Turin-Rome: 1931), p. 139.

rectly intuited by the human intellect, but they are the regulating and guiding powers (*ratio regulans*) and at the same time the cause (*motiva*) for the origin of knowledge and its certitude in our minds.

## CHAPTER X

### HISTORICAL AND DOCTRINAL BACKGROUNDS

**T**HUS far the doctrines on the nature of God, on the relation of God to the universe, and on the ubiquitous presence of God have been gleaned and pieced together from the voluminous and comprehensive writings of St. Augustine. In the course of the foregoing pages the above-mentioned doctrines were viewed principally in themselves and as presented in the various works of the Saint. Augustine's personal backgrounds have been considered because they had much to do precisely with the doctrines that were under study. Some casual and fragmentary observations have been made likewise on the historical and philosophical backgrounds of his doctrine when it was deemed that such information contributed to a better understanding of the matter under discussion.

It is the purpose of the present chapter to throw additional light on the doctrines studied in this work by treating separately and systematically the more important trends, doctrines, and tenets which directly or indirectly influenced the formation or expression of them. No doubt, much of the doctrine of St. Augustine was evolved on what was borrowed from patristic tradition and on what was taken from the achievements of Greek philosophical thought unaided by revelation. But not a little of his doctrine was developed in opposition to the then existing philosophical trends and religious tenets.

In a way, the philosophical meanderings and doctrinal vagaries of St. Augustine's mind were a boon to himself and to the Church in which he was born, which he abandoned, and espoused again. On account of these vicissitudes and experiences he had knowledge not only of the doctrines of his own time, but also of the errors and heresies that were rampant in his day as well as in the past. Augus-

tine's mind reflects not only the soul of the individual but also the spirit and beliefs of his and previous centuries. He made himself acquainted with the theological tradition of the Fathers and the philosophical history of the Greeks. And thus the African Church Father and universal Doctor of the Church has become an embodiment of the beliefs and the struggles that have filled the history of the first three centuries of the Church.

St. Augustine developed the powers of his genius to a great extent in controversies involving some of the most fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. It was in strifes such as those with the Manicheans, the Donatists, and the Pelagians that the doctrines which these sects opposed or questioned were studied and evolved, clarified, and defined. It will be discovered too that, through the combating of erroneous or less exact teachings of extraneous philosophies and dissenting sects, the Catholic doctrines which have been the subject of this treatise received their more precise expression, further elucidation, and scientific formulation. Hence the teaching of St. Augustine will be better understood, if the opposing doctrine is presented as its background.

The Bishop of Hippo writes not only rhetorically, but also poignantly, persuasively, and at times almost passionately. In part these are characteristics of his personal genius and of his African temperament, but in part they are the effect of his personal contact with error and the hotbeds of error, heresy, and schism. He is not combating an imaginary or distant foe, but one who was real and present. He had learned trend, tenet, doctrine, and error in his own life, and thus he spoke and wrote with the authority and conviction of a realist.

Augustine approached philosophy and religion with a pagan mind inherited from a pagan father and in large part from the world which surrounded him. His original concept of the nature of God was consequently along pagan lines, namely, materialistic. When at this time Augustine began to turn his mind toward God and to probe into the realm of the divine, the God of his imagination grew in quantitative extension only. As the young Augustine gradually perceived that God must be greater than other beings, or even more huge than all beings taken together, his imagination also gradually stretched this materialistic divine Being to enormous



proportions of immensity, so as to be equal to or even surpass the extensions of the universe. Still the divine substance remained corporeal and limited. Hence the divine presence in the universe was explained in terms of material bodies.<sup>1</sup> As the mind of Augustine progressed in its quest of truth and grew more mature, it was able gradually to disengage itself from the grosser limitations and cruder forms of materialism which were naturally incompatible with the notion of a Supreme Being. At the moment that he made the eventful discovery that God is a pure spirit, he found the master-key to a true conception of God, and to a true religion based upon that conception.

### THE STOICS

The Stoic philosophers have contributed not a little to the patristic and Augustinian doctrine of God, especially of the presence of God. "Much as Christian philosophy owed to the schools of Plato and Aristotle, particularly the former, the contribution of Stoic tradition to the common stock of ideas is by no means negligible."<sup>2</sup> Although the Stoics admit a dual principle to explain their cosmology, viz., matter which is devoid of qualities, and Reason or God which is the active immanent principle in the universe, nevertheless their doctrine constitutes a monistic materialism. For their God (who is the Consciousness of the world) is ultimately material, even though He is not as gross as the substrate on which he works.<sup>3</sup> In opposition to the Epicurean remoteness of God from the universe, the Stoic doctrine maintained that God pervaded the universe. Since this divine pervasion of the world, which was represented as a sphere,<sup>4</sup> was of a quasi-material nature, God was presented as having form.

Thus, Cicero, treating of gods, divides his treatise into these topics: 1. there are gods—*esse deos*; 2. their nature—*quales sint*,

<sup>1</sup> For example, cf. *Sermo* 277, 19, 18 (PL 38, 1268); *ibid.*, 14, 14 (col. 1265); *ibid.*, 13, 13 (col. 1264); *Sermo* 53, 8 (PL 38, 367); *Sermo* 23, 6, 6 (PL 38, 157-58); *Sermo ad catech.*, 2, 2 (PL 40, 662).

<sup>2</sup> G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: 1952), p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Cicero, *Acad. Post.*, I, II, 39: "(Zeno) nullo modo arbitratur quidquam effici posse ab ea (natura) quae expers esset corporis—nec vero aut quod efficeretur, posse esse non corpus." Plutarch, *De Comm. Nolit.*, 1073 e. Cf. F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 388.

<sup>4</sup> Cicero, *De natura deorum*, II, c. 17 ff.

and here he deals with the form or shape of the gods; 3. that the world is governed by them—*mundum ab his administrari*; 4. that men are guided by them—*consulere eos rebus humanis*.<sup>5</sup> The question of the divine form, was one which was deeply rooted in Greek philosophy, and never lost its importance.<sup>6</sup>

This doctrine of the Stoics constitutes a background for much that was taught by the Fathers on the nature of God. The Fathers denied a material form or a physical configuration. "The protest against the ascription of form and figure to the being of God is really simply a protest against all materialistic notions. Configuration is the corollary of existence in physical space. The denial of it to God means just that the divine being, though truly and concretely subsisting, is not subject to the rules of Euclid or the geometers." <sup>7</sup> This mode of reasoning was well established before the time of St. Augustine, but it was left to him to develop the doctrine upon which such reasoning was founded, and hence his insistence on the simplicity, immutability, and the spirituality of God.

In the teaching of the Stoics, God is the principle which acts and fashions all things according to active forms which he contains within himself. Thus God is the  $\delta$  Λόγος and the active forms are the λόγοι σπερματικοί, out of which all individual things grow and develop in the world: "They are the seeds which unfold themselves in the forms of individual things." <sup>8</sup> This teaching concerning the λόγοι σπερματικοί was found acceptable to the Neoplatonists and adapted to their philosophical, religious system of thought, and from the latter it was adopted by St. Augustine under the name of *rationes seminales*. It means, in St. Augustine's writings, "that all the potentialities and causes of all things that were to appear were fixed in the beginning not merely generically but specifically, in other words, that the *rationes seminales* were determined exactly for all future beings. . . . We mean that these powers were there in matter, capable of producing the various effects that we now

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, *loc. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford: 1948), p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> Prestige, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>8</sup> Copleston, *op. cit.*, I, 389.

see and that God commanded, as it were, these powers to produce definitely these facts.”<sup>9</sup>

In a similar manner St. Augustine speaks of a *natura seminalis*. Adam is said to be the head of mankind, not only because the life of the body originates from him as from the first parent, but also because the *natura seminalis* was implanted in him for propagation. Man's future spiritual status was made dependent upon the proto-parent Adam. Man is said to have been inclosed in Adam's person, in such a manner that man is to be born in the condition of the innocent Adam or the sinful Adam, depending upon what course the latter chooses.<sup>10</sup> And thus the “seminal nature” brings, in the order of grace and supernatural life, unity to the whole human race, causes a peculiar solidarity, and results in a certain stricter dependence than that of mere origin, upon our protoparent.

#### PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY

In order to understand fully and genetically the theology of the Fathers and of St. Augustine we must not only consider the sacred pages of Holy Writ, but must also revert to the more distant sources of Greek philosophy. Many an expression, some reasoning, some particular teaching of the Fathers will be enlightened by some phase of Greek philosophy. In particular, treating of the divine mode of presence, it has been stated that one of the stock expressions of the Latin and Greek Fathers has been that God is not contained in the universe, but contains the universe. The problem involved in these words has its roots in the Ionian pioneers of philosophy, and was handed down to succeeding generations of Greek philosophers.

The great problem for these Greek philosophical physicists was the problem of the origin of all things. Thales explained all things as forming out of water; the Stoics, out of elemental fire; Anaximenes, out of air. But the Milesian naturalist Anaximander maintained that the great source of all things, and the stuff out of which they originate cannot be identical with any of the substances in

<sup>9</sup> M. J. McKeough, *The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales in St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1926), pp. 54-55.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *De civ. Dei*, XIII, 14 (PL 41, 386; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 572-73).

the world, but must be "some different kind of substance" so as to give rise to the vast multitude and variety of them.<sup>11</sup> Hence Anaximander named this source, or substance, or being *Apeiron*, the Boundless,<sup>12</sup> which means (according to the ancient interpreters following in the footsteps of Aristotle) an inexhaustible source of nourishment for all Becoming.<sup>13</sup> It does not, therefore, signify something indefinite and undetermined in quality, as it is interpreted by some modern philosophers.<sup>14</sup> Moreover this philosopher of Miletus was the first, according to the testimony of the learned Neoplatonist Simplicius, to have stated that the *Apeiron* is the principle—the *Arche*.<sup>15</sup> That the expression *Apeiron* "is of epoch-making importance in Greek philosophy is clear from the frequency with which we encounter similar statements both in the other pre-Socratics and in later philosophers."<sup>16</sup>

The following passage of Aristotle is a commentary on the *Apeiron* of Anaximander:

It is clear from these considerations that the inquiry concerns the physicist. Nor is it without reason that they all make it a principle or source. We cannot say that the infinite has no effect, and the only effectiveness which we can ascribe to it is that of a principle. Everything is either a source or derived from a source. But there cannot be a source of the infinite or limitless, for that would be a limit of it. Further as it is a beginning, it is both uncreatable and indestructible. For there must be a point at which what has come to be reaches completion, and also a termination of all passing away. This is why, as we say, there is no principle of *this*, but it is this which is held to be the principle of other things, and to encompass all and to steer all, as those assert who do not recognize, alongside the infinite, other causes, such as Mind or Friend-

<sup>11</sup> K. Freeman, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Oxford: 1949), pp. 56 ff.

<sup>12</sup> J. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (4th ed.; London: 1930), pp. 54 ff. Cf. Rodolfo Mondolfo, *L'Infinito nel Pensiero dei Greci* (Florence: 1934); *id.*, "L'Infinità divina nelle teogonie greche presocratiche," *Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni*, IX (1933), pp. 72 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Aëtius, *Placita*, I, 3, 3, ed. H. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin: 1879), p. 277; Anaximander, A 14, ed. H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (6 Auf.; Berlin: 1951), I, 85.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 24: "Anaximander therefore arrived at the idea, the primary element, the *Urstoff*, is indeterminate."

<sup>15</sup> Simplicius, *Phys.*, 24, 13, Anaximander, A 9, ed. Diels, I, 83.

<sup>16</sup> Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 31.



ship. Further they identify it with the Divine, for it is 'deathless and imperishable' as Anaximander says, with the majority of physicists.<sup>17</sup>

These words contain not merely a reflection of Aristotle upon this phase of the philosophy of the physicists, but some of the very words of the argument of those philosophers themselves.<sup>18</sup> The Boundless is without beginning and without end, but it itself is the beginning (*ἀρχή*) for all that exists, and it is the end (*τελευτή*) to which all that exists must return. Of the *Apeiron* Anaximander predicates the epithets "immortal" and "indestructible," and "divine," which latter is an independent concept (as is evident from the definite article with a substantivized adjective—*τὸ θεῖον*) identified with the Boundless. When he ascribes to the *Apeiron* the power of encompassing all things (*περιέχειν ἅπαντα*) and of governing all things (*κυβεργᾶν*), he makes it the bearer of supreme power and universal dominion.<sup>19</sup>

If it is true that the pre-Socratic philosophy of Ionia became the cradle of Western thought,<sup>20</sup> and gave rise to a course of thought which was to be perpetuated for generations and centuries,<sup>21</sup> then it is likewise true that this pioneer and leader of a new movement in natural theology gave expression to thoughts which would inspire and agitate the minds of subsequent philosophers, and which in due time would be wafted beyond the confines of the seaboard of Asia Minor.

Anaximander said that the Boundless, *the Apeiron*, encompasses or contains all things. Now, Aristotle maintained that the *Apeiron* is not that which encompasses, but that which is encompassed by all things. This he does on the grounds that the *Apeiron* of the philosophical physicists was identifiable with matter (*hyle*). But matter, runs his argument, does not encompass things; it is en-

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, *Phys.*, III, 4, *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (New York: 1941), p. 259.

<sup>18</sup> H. Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of Presocratic Philosophy* (Baltimore: 1935), p. 20.

<sup>19</sup> W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford: 1948), pp. 25 ff.

<sup>20</sup> Copleston, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> A. Covotti, *I Presocratici* (Napoli: 1934), p. 31: "Nel sesto secolo A. C. ci si presenta, in Grecia, uno dei fenomeni meravigliosi della coltura humana. La Scuola di Mileto crea la ricerca scientifica: e le linee fondamentali, stabilite in quei primi albori, si perpetuano attraverso le generazioni e i secoli."

compassed in order to constitute something; in other words, it is contained in all things. In the Aristotelian scheme of causes the *Apeiron* must be relegated to the material cause. All the other Greek thinkers, too, evidently treat the Infinite as matter—that is why it is inconsistent in them to make it that which contains, and not what is contained.

Aristotle has adapted the teaching of Anaximander to a principle which is supreme in all his philosophy, viz., the distinction between matter and form, as the constituents of all beings. But the Boundless of Anaximander is not one and the same with the Aristotelian concept of matter, and it “is not simply something which, as matter, is enveloped by form. It is rather the thing which encompasses all things and governs all things, something active, indeed the most active thing in the world.”<sup>22</sup> Anaximander did not learn to distinguish between matter and form.

These two activities, viz., of encompassing and of governing, so vigorously and yet so hieratically introduced by Anaximander to describe the office of the Boundless, recur again and again in the philosophical religious thought of his successors. The term *περιέχειν*, to encompass, to contain, is found in Theophrastus,<sup>23</sup> in the only preserved fragment of Anaximenes,<sup>24</sup> twice in Anaxagoras.<sup>25</sup> The term *κυβερνᾶν*, to steer, guide, rule is used to denote the supreme dominion in passages of Heraclitus, Parmenides, Diogenes.<sup>26</sup> From pre-Socratic philosophy this terminology was inherited by Greek thinkers of a later period. These terms found their way into the doctrine and strifes of the Greek Fathers, to whom the Latin Fathers were indebted for the corresponding latinized expressions, as is evident from the writings of St. Augustine. Although the terms “to contain” and “to govern” employed so frequently by the Fathers are reminiscent of the long history of Greek philosophical thought, the full content of these terms as

<sup>22</sup> Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies*, I, 6, 1 (Anaximander A 11 ed. Diels, I, 83): encompasses all the worlds (*περιέχειν τοὺς κόσμους*).

<sup>24</sup> Aëtius, *Placita*, I, 3, 4 (Anaximenes B 2, ed. Diels, I, 95).

<sup>25</sup> B 2 (Simplicius, *Phys.*, 155, 30, ed. Diels, II, 33), and B 14 (Simplicius, *Phys.*, 157, 5, ed. Diels, II, 39-40).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. W. Kranz, Index to Diels's *Vorsokratiker* v. III (Berlin: 1952) under the words: *περιέχειν* and *κυβερνᾶν*; W. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, p. 202, n. 37.

used by the Fathers can be understood only in the light of what has been revealed of the Christian God in the pages of Sacred Scripture. These two predicates, "encompassing" and "governing," as was previously pointed out, have become inseparable from the concept of the divine presence in the universe.

### MANICHEISM

Another error against which the doctrine of the young Augustine must be considered and studied in the matter at hand is Manicheism, the substance of which is Zoroastrian dualism blended with Christian soteriology. In opposition to the strange and exotic errors of this religious sect not a few of the Saint's works have later been written.<sup>27</sup> Augustine's materialistic conception of God remained with him during this Manichean period in which he was entangled in fantastic sophistries. Consequently his manner of conceiving God's presence in the universe was likewise vitiated by his erroneous conception of the nature of God.

The most fundamental Manichean doctrine was the one concerning the existence of two primary but opposite principles—the one of supreme good and the other of supreme evil.<sup>28</sup> Here were two coeternal powers, the sources of all being in the universe. God, the highest good principle, who by His very nature was Light, was the source of all good.<sup>29</sup> The supreme evil principle, which by nature was Darkness and was identified with all that was material, was the source of all evil.<sup>30</sup> These two principles—the Good and the Bad—were originally separate and distinct,<sup>31</sup> and their respective emanations tend to be separate substances. Just as the supreme principles are disparate so are their effluences. Through a mythical struggle, however, some of the light particles emanating from the good principle—that is from God—were vanquished and devoured by the satellites of the evil principle.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Cf. P. Alfarc, *L'évolution intellectuelle de S. Augustin* (Paris: 1918), p. 531.

<sup>28</sup> *De duab. anim.*, 12, 16 (PL 42, 105; CSEL 25, ed. J. Zycha, I, 71).

<sup>29</sup> *Contra ep. Fundamenti*, 13, 16 (PL 42, 182; CSEL 25, I, 209).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 15, 19 (PL 42, 184; CSEL 25, I, 212).

<sup>31</sup> *De duab. anim.*, 12, 16 (PL 42, 105-6; CSEL 25, I, 71).

<sup>32</sup> *Contra Faust. Manich.*, 2, 4 (PL 42, 211; CSEL 25, ed. J. Zycha, I, 256-57); cf. F. Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees* (Cambridge: 1925), p. 25.

It is to be observed that not only the gross matter but also the Light of their God was conceived by them in a materialistic fashion. Their closest approximation to a spiritual concept was natural light, and this they contrasted with physical matter. Light was the most ethereal and subtle physical substance with which the Manicheans were acquainted.<sup>33</sup> "There was no reality other than physical substance; no being could be completely incorporeal, spiritual, according to this theory. Manicheism was essentially a materialistic explanation of reality."<sup>34</sup> St. Augustine teaches that every essence or nature must be either a body or a genuine spirit which is by nature incorporeal; he then subdivides spirits into an immutable spirit who is God and a mutable spirit which is above matter but created by God.<sup>35</sup>

Augustine rejects the Manichean conception according to which God has an air-like or ethereal body. And this he does arguing precisely from the mode of divine presence. The mode of presence of all things is determined by the type of being: material beings have their proper presence; spiritual but mutable beings have their own, and the spiritual, immutable Being has His own. These modes of presence have been studied in a previous chapter. It is ridiculous, he contends, to subject a purely spiritual and immutable nature, which is subsisting truth and wisdom, to the category of a quantitative being, and thus conceive of it as extended in space, and as having material parts outside of parts measured by the corresponding parts of space.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Contra Faust. Manich.*, 21, 1, 2 (PL 42, 387-89; CSEL 25, I, 586-89); *De Haer.*, 46 (PL 42, 34-39).

<sup>34</sup> V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee: 1945), p. 19. Cf. E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de s. Augustin* (Paris: 1931), p. 242.

<sup>35</sup> *De natura boni*, 1 (PL 42, 552; CSEL 25 ed. J. Zycha, II, 855): "Omnis quippe natura aut spiritus, aut corpus est. Spiritus incommutabilis Deus est: spiritus mutabilis facta natura est, sed corpore melior: corpus autem spiritus non est, nisi cum ventus, quia nobis invisibilis est, et tamen vis ejus non parva sentitur, alio quodam modo spiritus dicitur."

<sup>36</sup> *Contra ep. Fundamenti*, 15, 20 (PL 42, 184; CSEL 25, I, 212-13): "Si aerium vel etiam aetherium corpus diceret esse naturam Dei, profecto irrideretur ab omnibus qui sapientiae veritatisque naturam per nulla locorum spatia distentam atque diffusam, sine ulla mole magnam et magnificam, nec in parte minorem, et in parte majorem, sed per omnia aequalem summo Patri, nec aliud habentem hic et aliud alibi, sed ubique integram, ubique praesentem qualicumque acie jam serenioris mentis intueri valent."



The youthful Augustine was driven into the fold of the Manicheans by the palpable existence of evil in the world. Since he could not solve this vexing problem by himself he gave himself over to the Manicheans who offered an easy solution of it. Augustine thus accepted the existence of twofold coeternal principle living in unceasing mutual strife, and the everlasting conflict of their respective emanations as an explanation for the existence of good and evil in the world. Later as Augustine's notion of God became more clarified, he repudiated categorically the Manichean errors in works written between 388 and 406. In the matter of the existence of evil, St. Augustine emphatically reiterates again and again the doctrine that all things whether material or spiritual owe their origin to God, the sole prime principle of all being.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, because all things are from God, the sole good principle, they are all good in themselves,<sup>38</sup> although they are not so good or so supremely good as God is Himself.<sup>39</sup>

There are two diverse manners of proceeding from God. The one is intrinsic to God, the other extrinsic to Him. In the intrinsic, mysterious procession, the Son is begotten by the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The whole divine substance, essence or nature is communicated from the Father to the Son, and again from the Father and the Son as a single communicating principle to the Holy Ghost. Thus the divine nature is common to all three divine Persons.<sup>40</sup> The universe proceeds from God in an extrinsic manner, and therefore it is not one with,

<sup>37</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 15 (PL 41, 331 ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 483); *ibid.*, XII, 5 (PL 41, 353; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 518); *Contra Secund. Manich.*, 10 (PL 42, 586; CSEL 25, II, 919); *De nat. boni*, I (PL 42, 551-52; CSEL 25, II, 855).

<sup>38</sup> *Contra ep. Fundamenti*, 34, 38 (PL 42, 200; CSEL 25, I, 238); *ibid.*, 25, 27 (PL 42, 191; CSEL 25, I, 224).

<sup>39</sup> *De mor. Manich.*, II, 4, 6 (PL 32, 1347).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. works on St. Augustine's doctrine of the Holy Trinity; e.g., M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster: 1927); J. Lebreton, "Saint Augustin théologien de la Trinité. Son exégèse des Théophanies," *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (Rome: 1931), II, 821-36. For the difference which exists between the teaching on the Trinity of St. Augustine and the Neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus (in his *Enneads*, V, 2, 3; VI, 7, 15, 35), who had much influence upon St. Augustine, cf. E. Brehier, *La philosophie de Plotin* (Paris: 1928), pp. 141 ff.; M. Schmaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28; R. Arnou, *Le désir de Dieu dans la philosophie de Plotin* (Paris: 1921); R. Jolivet, *Saint Augustin et le néoplatonisme chrétien* (Paris: 1932), ch. 9; A. D'Alès, *De Deo Trino* (Paris: 1934), pp. 148 ff.

nor of the same substance as, the Divinity. Although it was made by God, it was not made from God.<sup>41</sup> Thus, while the Manicheans maintained that all things emanate from either the one prime principle or the other, and consequently are of the same nature as either principle, St. Augustine distinguishes between the internal processions which are of the same divine nature and the external processions which are not of that divine nature.

The universe was made by God from nothing—*ex nihilo*.<sup>42</sup> The *ex nihilo* of St. Augustine must not be thought of as something positive or causal in the production of being. It must not be imagined as a co-principle with the act of creation in bringing creatures into existence, as if God were dependent upon the *nihilum* and had to rely upon it as a part in the process of creation.<sup>43</sup> For "*nihil* (to use the Bishop's words), when truly and properly called, is not something";<sup>44</sup> it does not exist, it is not at all.<sup>45</sup> The particle *ex*, therefore, merely signifies an order of succession, and the *nihilum* is tantamount to non-being.<sup>46</sup> The Augustine-minded St. Bonaventure expresses this relation trenchantly when he says: "productio ex nihilo ponit esse post non esse."<sup>47</sup> And St. Thomas, too, develops his notion along Augustinian lines of the "de nihilo" when he says that creation is the production of being inasmuch as it is precisely a being, and not merely some substantial or accidental

<sup>41</sup> *De nat. boni*, 1 (PL 42, 551; CSEL 25 ed. J. Zycha, II, 855): "Caetera omnia bona non nisi ab illo sunt, sed non de illo." *Ibid.*, 27 (PL 42, 560; CSEL 25, II, 868): "non autem de ipso, quia non de substantia sua."

<sup>42</sup> Cf. C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), pp. 6, 10 ff.

<sup>43</sup> It is interpreted in this manner by I. A. Dorner, *Augustinus, sein theologisches System und seine religionsphilosophische Anschauung* (Berlin: 1873), pp. 43 f., where he says: "Nur mit Hilfe der Negation kann eine *multiformis essentia* entstehen," which he does not admit as forming the proper notion of creation.

<sup>44</sup> *De natura boni*, 25 (PL 42, 559; CSEL 25, II, 867, lines 6-7): "nihil utique non est aliquid, quando vere et proprie dicitur." And again, *ibid.*, 26: "fecerit . . . utique de nihilo, non enim erat aliud, unde faceret."

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 (PL 42, 551; CSEL 25, II, 855): "[Deus] tam omnipotens est, ut possit etiam de nihilo, id est ex eo, quod omnino non est, bona facere."

<sup>46</sup> F. Grassmann, *Die Schöpfungslehre des hl. Augustinus und Darwins* (Regensburg: 1889), p. 77, where he makes the *ex nihilo* of St. Augustine equivalent to *nulla omnino substantia*. Cf. J. Santeler, "Zur Lehre von der Schöpfung," *Zeit. f. kath. Theol.*, LXIX (1947), 221.

<sup>47</sup> *Breviloquium*, p. II, c. 1 (*Tria opuscula* [3 ed.; Quaracchi, 1911], p. 61). Cf. E. Gilson, *La Philosophie de Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: 1924), p. 183.

change of being.<sup>48</sup> Another variation of this notion is the classical definition of creation which was adopted also by the Vatican Council; viz., creation is the production of something *secundum totam suam substantiam*.<sup>49</sup>

It is precisely this manner of origination that must account for the evil that exists in the world. God is fullness of being; to created beings He communicates a limited being so that they have a tendency toward the nothingness from which they were drawn.<sup>50</sup> God is all-goodness; He communicates limited goodness to every creature. On this account created beings are capable of falling short of the good imparted to them and are thus subject to change and corruption.<sup>51</sup> Human beings perpetuate evil in sinning through their free will.<sup>52</sup> Although sinning men constitute a part of the universe and are in God as their supporting cause and moving agent, they cannot affect or contaminate the nature of God for it is incorruptible and immutable.<sup>53</sup>

In the Manichean philosophy evil is a being, a substance, an entity; in the philosophy of St. Augustine evil cannot be a substance, for every substance is in itself good. Evil is for St. Augustine nothing more than a privation or a defect of some good. He calls it a *defectus substantiae*.<sup>54</sup> It is not a nature, but it is against nature (*contra naturam*).<sup>55</sup> God, therefore, who is the creator of substances, essences, natures, or existences cannot be the source or creative cause of evil.<sup>56</sup>

Divine omnipresence in St. Augustine's doctrine, as has already

<sup>48</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 44, a. 2; q. 45, a. 4 ad 1; cf. J. Stüfeler, "Das Wirken Gottes in den Geschöpfen nach dem hl. Thomas," *Zeit. f. kath. Theol.*, II (1925), 204-13; *Id.*, Gott der erste Beweger aller Dinge ([Philosophie und Grenzwissenschaften, VI, 3/4] (Innsbruck: 1936), pp. 67-83).

<sup>49</sup> *Col. Lac.*, VII, 255; ASS V (1869), 469: "Si quis non confiteatur, mundum resque omnes, quae in eo continentur, et spirituales et materiales secundum totam suam substantiam a Deo ex nihilo esse productas. . . ."

<sup>50</sup> *Contra Secund. Manich.*, 15 (PL 42, 590; CSEL 25, II, 927).

<sup>51</sup> *Contra ep. Fundamenti*, 38, 44 (PL 42, 203; CSEL 25 ed. J. Zycha, I, 244); *Contra Jul.*, I, 9 (PL 44, 671); *Confess.*, XII, 7, 7 (PL 32, 828-29).

<sup>52</sup> *Contra Felic.*, II, 19 (PL 42, 549; CSEL 25, II, 849).

<sup>53</sup> *De natura boni*, 28-29 (PL 42, 560; CSEL 25, II, 868-69).

<sup>54</sup> *Contra Secund. Manich.*, 15 (PL 42, 590; CSEL 25, II, 927); cf. C. J. O'Toole, *op. cit.*, pp. 7 f.

<sup>55</sup> *Contra ep. Fundamenti*, 33, 36 (PL 42, 199; CSEL 25, I, 237).

<sup>56</sup> *De mor. Manich.*, II, 4, 6 (PL 32, 1347).

been pointed out, is inseparably bound up with the divine act of creation. In opposing the Manicheans in their vagaries concerning the origin of all things from a twofold independent and coeternal principle, Augustine emphasizes the exclusive authorship of the universe as belonging to God through His creative power. Creation *ex nihilo* is an exclusive property and act of the divine omnipotence. But things are dependent upon God not only in so far as God is their creator but also in so far as God sustains them in existence and moves them by co-operating in their every act and motion. The African Bishop's point of contention against the Manicheans is this: the divine power creates matter which the Manichean calls evil; furthermore, it operates intrinsically, as it were, in that same matter, sustaining it in existence.<sup>57</sup> Matter in itself and contact with matter is not evil.

#### NEOPLATONISM

It is now universally admitted, I believe, that of all philosophies prior to and contemporary with St. Augustine, Neoplatonism has exerted the greatest influence upon his mind. Positively it has provided a stimulus, themes, and phraseology which have become a Christian heritage. Negatively it has offered philosophical and theological content which were unacceptable to Christianity, and which Augustine later repudiated. In this process of repudiation Christian argumentation was developed. Just as Augustine as a Manichean came in contact with a dualistic conception of God and the universe, so now in professing Neoplatonism he came in contact with a monistic form to explain the relationship between God and the universe.

Plotinus explains the origin of the universe through an effluence from the deity. Through a process of emanations from the "One" there arises a chain of disparate beings tapering off in dignity and importance the further the beings are from the "One." 1. The first emanation is the aboriginal Intellect (Thought, Mind, *Noûs*) which is eternal and beyond time: it consists in the immediate apprehension of the One from which it emanated, and of itself, and knows all things as one who possesses all knowledge of the past and future in the present. 2. From the Intellect emanates the Over-

<sup>57</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, IV, 12, 22-3 (PL 34, 304; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 108).



Soul, or World-Soul, which is immaterial and simple in nature; "it forms the connecting link between the super-sensual world and the sensual world, and so looks not only upwards to the *Nous*, but also downwards toward the world of nature."<sup>58</sup> 3. From the World-Soul proceeds the human soul, which is constituted of a twofold element, the higher one belonging to the sphere of the Intellect, and lower one directly connecting it with the body.<sup>59</sup> 4. Finally, the world of sense, nature, matter is the ultimate emanation from the One; and these constitute the lowest grade of being.<sup>60</sup>

The investigators of Plotinus are not agreed as to the innermost nature of the Plotinian emanations or of the origin of all created things, nor consequently as to the nature of his philosophical system of thought. Some interpret the system of Plotinus by a virtual monistic spiritualism; many others by an emanative pantheism (and this is quite the common interpretation); still others by a dynamic pantheism.<sup>61</sup> There are some who see Plotinus selecting a middle of the way policy between theistic creation and monistic pantheism.<sup>62</sup> Nor are such wanting as are inclined to think that Plotinus' concept of the origin of created beings borders on the Christian concept of "creation from nothing."<sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup> F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), p. 468.

<sup>59</sup> Copleston, *loc. cit.* Cf. P. V. Pistorius, *Plotinus and Neoplatonism* (Cambridge: 1952), pp. 53 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *The System of Plotinus* by the editors of the "Shrine of Wisdom" (London: 1924), pp. 10 ff.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. B. Świtalski, *Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), p. 7; A. Covotti, "La cosmogonia plotiniana e l'interpretazione panteisto-dinamica dello Zeller," *Scienze morale, storiche e filologiche*, IV (1895), 371-93; 469-88.

<sup>62</sup> F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 467: "The truth of the matter would seem to be that, while rejecting free creation out of nothing on the ground that this would evolve change in God, Plotinus equally rejects a fully pantheistic or monistic theory on the other hand."

<sup>63</sup> Such is the case with Wörter-Kleffner, "Neuplatonismus" in Wetzer und Weltes *Kirchenlexikon*, 200-203; and with P. Henry, "Bulletin critique des études plotiniennes" (1929-31), *Nouvelle Revue Theologique*, LIX (1932), 922 f.: "... le panthéisme de Plotin, si panthéisme il y a, nous paraît assez subtil: il ne peut guère que se deduire—en remontant—de la possibilité naturelle d'une vision immédiate de Dieu; et—en descendant—de la doctrine de la nécessité de la création. Si l'on fait abstraction de ce caractère de nécessité—capitale, assurément—le concept plotinien de la production de choses recouvre, semble-t-il presque celui de création tel qu'on le trouve dans la philosophie, implicite ou explicite des docteurs chrétiens. . . ."

In order to understand better the function of the material in the system of Plotinus a glance at his anthropology will be of much aid. Man is composed of a spiritual and a material element.<sup>64</sup> Man's ultimate end, the attainment of which is to bring peace and happiness to him, is a return to "the One," from whom he emanated. This union with the divinity must be attained through the soul,<sup>65</sup> which has the "potentiality of verging either downwards or upwards; that is, speaking metaphorically, descending to Body or ascending to Spirit."<sup>66</sup> The task of the soul in order to attain perfection and happiness is to free itself from the trammels of the flesh, from the prison of the body, and thereby to return to the "Oneness" from which it originally emanated.<sup>67</sup> This process is accomplished by intellectual knowledge, which is offered by philosophy. The latter points out the end and the means leading to that end; it supplies us with a knowledge of oneself, liberates the soul from matter, makes it virtuous and thereby renders possible a union with God.<sup>68</sup>

It must be observed that while the philosophical system of Plotinus is basically monistic when viewed from its starting-point, it nevertheless entails other fundamental elements which are accountable for dualistic systems.<sup>69</sup> There is a cleavage by nature between matter and spirit as between two disparate and even inimical elements; there is opposition and warfare between the soul and body; for, the material element which constitutes the last phase of the evolution of the Proto-Being, is evil and destructful of the spiritual.<sup>70</sup> Souls "in coming down" are said to have made a mistake first

<sup>64</sup> *Enn.*, IV, 3, 17 (ed. Volkmann, II, 29 f.); *Enn.*, V, 1, 6 (ed. Volkmann, II, 167); 4, 1 (ed. Volkmann, II, 202 f.); *Enn.*, III, 2, 15 (ed. Volkmann, I, 242 ff.).

<sup>65</sup> W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (London: 1941), I, 202-3: "The soul is in the centre, not at the summit, of Plotinus' philosophy. It stands midway between the phenomenal world, of which it is the principle, and the world of Spirit, which is its principle."

<sup>66</sup> *The System of Plotinus*, p. 10.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. E. Krakowski, *Plotin et le paganisme religieux* (Paris: 1933), pp. 182 f.

<sup>68</sup> *Enn.*, I, 3, 1 (ed. Volkmann, I, 57 f.); *Enn.*, VI, 4 (ed. Volkmann, II, 362); 9, 3 (ed. Volkmann, II, 510 f.); *Enn.*, V, 5, 4 (ed. Volkmann, II, 210 f.); 6, 4 (ed. Volkmann, II, 225 f.); *Enn.*, III, 9, 2 (ed. Volkmann, I, 348); 8, 5 (ed. Volkmann, I, 336 f.).

<sup>69</sup> R. Arnou, *Étude de détail sur le vocabulaire et la pensée des Ennéades de Plotin* (Paris: 1921), p. 87: "Dans le cadre d'un système moniste, la pensée de Plotin reste profondément dualiste."

<sup>70</sup> *Enn.*, III, 6, 7 (ed. Volkmann, I, 289); *Enn.*, I, 2, 1 (ed. Volkmann, I, 49); 6, 5; 8, 3; 5, 7. Cf. J. Pastuszka, *Nieśmiertelność duszy ludzkiej u św. Augustyna*

of leaving the place up yonder, and secondly of entering into a body.<sup>71</sup> In order to be restored to the original state of perfection which the soul possessed when a part of the Over-Soul and before uniting with the body, it must free itself from the body as from a sensible, contaminating element. The "way of purification" of the soul is, therefore, flight and liberation from the world of sense.<sup>72</sup>

What is the nature of matter in the writings of Plotinus? Basically it is the matter of the Stoics<sup>73</sup> (which is a quantitative substance having three dimensions), with additional elements of Aristotle's and Plato's matter. If, in the system of Plotinus, a material object is constituted through the illumination of matter (which takes place in Aristotle when form is united with *hyle*), then this matter cannot be said to be in darkness; but if it is contrasted with the intelligible, and thus represents the *ἀνάγκη* of Plato's *Timaeus*, it is said to be in formless darkness, the principle of negation, the source of evil in the material world.<sup>74</sup> Plotinus thus combined Platonic and Aristotelian themes, for though he adopted the Platonic conception of matter as *ἀνάγκη*, as the antithesis to the intelligible, as the privation of light, he also adopted the Aristotelian conception of matter as a substrate of form, as an integral component of material objects.<sup>75</sup>

Contrary to the tenets of Neoplatonism, St. Augustine teaches that all things proceed from God, not by a process of emanation, but by an act of God's free will through creation; not by the neces-

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(Lublin: 1930), p. 165; E. Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (New York: 1936), pp. 108 ff.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. W. R. Inge, *op. cit.*, I, 257 ff.

<sup>72</sup> *Enn.*, VI, 9, 9 (ed. Volkman, II, 521); *Enn.*, III, 6, 5 (ed. Volkman, I, 288). Cf. B. Switalski, *Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), pp. 8 f.; P. V. Pistorius, *Plotinus and Neoplatonism* (Cambridge: 1952), p. 144.

<sup>73</sup> Plutarch, *De com. not.* c. 4 (Opera II, 1322); cf. C. Baeumker, *Das Problem der Materie in der griechischen Philosophie. Eine hist.-kritische Untersuchung* (Münster: 1890), p. 332.

<sup>74</sup> A. H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 193: "In this way Plotinus tries to combine Aristotle's idea of matter as a pure negation, a mere potentiality of becoming with Plato's idea of matter as recalcitrant, resisting the ordering and informing activity of Soul."

<sup>75</sup> F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), I, 469.

sity of His nature, but from His goodness. God does not draw created things out of His own substance; hence they are not a part of God. If they were, God would also be partaker of the changes which created things undergo.<sup>76</sup> In his theology there is perhaps no doctrine which is as conspicuous and emphatic as the absolute immutability of God. Nor does God produce material creatures from some pre-existent matter which is coeternal with Himself, but out of nothing.<sup>77</sup>

Moreover, St. Augustine, following the tradition of the Fathers, states that it is incompatible with the perfection of the divine nature to have matter coexist from eternity with it.<sup>78</sup> And thus he excludes not only the factuality of the eternal creation of existing matter and the universe, but also the intrinsic possibility of an eternal creation. The act of creation places the Creator in a category altogether distinct from the creatures which that act places in existence. The creative act makes creatures dependent entirely upon God for their existence, and necessitates a continuance of that same act to retain them in existence: the act of sustaining and preserving things in existence is to be considered as a continuation of the creative act.<sup>79</sup> Because things are created by God, they are by that same token good, and that includes formless matter, even though that is the lowest in the scale of created beings.

St. Augustine could find no support in the philosophy of his predecessors for the notion of creation which he established philosophically in harmony with revealed doctrine. Neither Plato nor Aristotle<sup>80</sup> seem to have arrived at a notion of creation in the strict sense of the term, i.e., a creation *ex nihilo*. They were in possession of the right premises from which the notion could have been derived, but they either did not dare to deduce the consequent truth or did not sufficiently develop it.

<sup>76</sup> *Confess.*, XI, 4, 6-5, 7 (PL 32, 811; ed. M. Skutella, 267-69); *De vera relig.*, 18, 55 (PL 34, 137).

<sup>77</sup> Cf. J. Guitton, *Le temps et l'éternité chez Plotin et saint Augustin* (Paris: 1933), p. 139; J. P. Roeser, "Emanation and Creation. The Doctrines of Plotinus and Augustine on the Radical Origin of the Universe," *The New Scholasticism* XIX (1945), 85-116.

<sup>78</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VIII, 23, 44 (PL 34, 389; CSEL 28, 2, 262): "Ita (est) aeterna (natura divina) ut ei aliquid coaeternum esse non possit."

<sup>79</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 1, 5 (PL 40, 133).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. R. Jolivet, "Aristôte et la notion de création," *Rev. de sciences phil. et théol.*, XIX (1930), 5 ff.



The Scholastics themselves were not unanimous in interpreting the minds of these two outstanding Greek philosophers on the subject of creation. In the interpretation of St. Thomas,<sup>81</sup> Plato taught that the *materia informis* and the ideal forms were eternal, and Aristotle, also, held that the primeval universe was eternal. According to St. Bonaventure,<sup>82</sup> who maintains that eternity of matter or the world is incompatible with the notion of creation, neither Aristotle, nor Plato arrived at a notion of creation.<sup>83</sup> And the opinion of St. Bonaventure is the one that is commonly followed by more recent scholastics.<sup>84</sup> The Arabian interpreters of Aristotle, especially Averroes and his followers, taught that the universe was created in eternity.<sup>85</sup> It is certain, that St. Thomas,<sup>86</sup> himself taught the intrinsic possibility of a creation from eternity, but it is a matter of controversy whether this intrinsic possibility is to be interpreted as including all created beings, or is to be restricted to beings having a permanent existence.<sup>87</sup>

Nevertheless tradition before and in St. Augustine's time was very strong against the eternity of matter or a primeval world. The Fathers and ecclesiastical writers have written frequently against those systems of philosophical and religious thought which countenanced the existence of uncreated matter or objects. Thus, Justin Martyr,<sup>88</sup> Theophilus of Antioch,<sup>89</sup> and St. Athanasius<sup>90</sup>

<sup>81</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 44, a. 2; *De pot.*, q. 3, a. 5.

<sup>82</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 1, a. 1., q. 1 and 2 (*Opera Omnia*, II [Ad Claras Aquas, 1885] p. 19 ff.).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Pius M. a Mondreganes, "De impossibilitate aeternae mundi creationis ad mentem S. Bonaventurae," *Collectanea Franciscana*, V (1935), 529-70.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *Francisk. Studien.*, XXIII (1936), 412.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. M. Worms, *Die Lehre von der Anfanglosigkeit der Welt bei den mittelalterlichen arabischen Philosophen* (Münster: 1900).

<sup>86</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, *Opusculum de aeternitate mundi*; In II, d. 1, q. 1, a. 5; CG II, 38; *De pot.*, q. 3, a. 14; *Quodl.* 12, q. 6, a. 1; *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 46, a. 2. Cf. T. Esser, *Die Lehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin über die Möglichkeit einer anfanglosen Schöpfung* (Münster: 1895); Stöckl, "Die thomistische Lehre von Weltanfang in ihren geschichtlichen Zusammenhänge" *Katholik*, I (1883), 225 ff.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. A. D. Sertillanges, "L'idée de creation dans S. Thomas d'Aquin," *Rev. des sciences phil. et théol.*, I (1907), 239-52.

<sup>88</sup> *Cohortatio ad Graecos*, I. 2 (MG 6, 281; *Corpus apologetarum christianorum saeculi secundi*, ed. I. C. T. de Otto, [Jenae: 1851-81], III, 78-80). This work, however, is considered spurious, Cf. B. Altaner, *Patrologie* (Freiburg: 1950), p. 93; J. Quasten, *Patrology* (Westminster, Md.: 1950), I, 205.

<sup>89</sup> *Ad Autol.*, 2, 4 (MG 6, 1052; CA 8, 54).

<sup>90</sup> *Orat. de incar. Verbi*, 2 (MG 25, 100).

have explicitly written against Plato. Tertullian<sup>91</sup> takes the Stoics to task on account of the same error. Origen,<sup>92</sup> Irenaeus,<sup>93</sup> Hilarius,<sup>94</sup> and St. John Chrysostom<sup>95</sup> refute, in general, the Platonic or Stoic tenets.

St. Augustine teaches a twofold stage in creation. The first act is that by which the *materia informis*, a formless matter, is brought into existence. It is neither a body nor a spirit; it has no color nor shape; it was not anything in the sense that it was a definite being, and yet it was not simply nothing.<sup>96</sup> It was a something which lay between actuality and nothing.<sup>97</sup> It was a being in potency for actualization into some definite entity. Whence does Augustine draw this concept? Some maintain that it is simply the prime matter of Aristotle.<sup>98</sup> Others consider it to be the formless matter of Plato.<sup>99</sup> But the matter of both Aristotle and Plato bears the characteristics of a metaphysical entity. Hence they cannot be considered as the source of the Augustinian concept of matter, at least in its entirety. It appears very likely that Augustine has borrowed his concept directly from Plotinus, who, in turn, inherited an extremely complicated tradition, "in which very large Aristotelian

<sup>91</sup> *Adv. Hermog.*, I, (CSEL 47, 126 f).

<sup>92</sup> *Peri Archon*, 2, 1, 4 (GCS 11, 185).

<sup>93</sup> *Fragmenta*, 6, ex sermone ad Demetrium (MG 7, 1231; ed. Harvey, II, 478).

<sup>94</sup> *Tract. super Psalmos* 148, 3 (CSEL 22, 860 ff.).

<sup>95</sup> *Hom. in Gen.*, 2, 2 (PG 53, 28).

<sup>96</sup> *Confess.*, XII, 3, 3 (PL 32, 827; ed. M. Skutella, 295): "Nonne tu, Domine, docuisti me, quod priusquam istam informem materiam formares atque distingueres, non erat aliquid, non color, non figura, non corpus, non spiritus? Non tamen omnino nihil, erat quaedam informitas sine ulla specie."

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, XII, 6, 6 (PL 32, 828; ed. M. Skutella, 297): "Citius enim non esse censebam, quod omni forma privaretur, quam cogitabam quiddam inter formatum et nihil, nec formatum nec nihil, informe prope nihil."

<sup>98</sup> Cf. N. Kaufmann, "Éléments aristotéliens dans la cosmologie et la psychologie de S. Augustin," *Revue Néo-Scholastique*, XI (1904), 146 ff.; G. Quadri, *Il pensiero filosofico di S. Agostino* (Firenze: 1934), p. 20.

<sup>99</sup> W. J. Roche, "Measure, Number, and Weight in Saint Augustine," *The New Scholasticism*, XV (1941), 373, who, at least in the passage which he has under consideration, believes that it is the Platonic concept of the formless matter that St. Augustine entertains. And C. Baumecker, *Das Problem der Materie in der griechischen Philosophie* (Münster: 1890), p. 383, n. 5: "Interessant ist es übrigens, aus der Erzählung Augustine (*Confess.*, XII, 4) zu hören, welche Mühe ist auch diesem grossen Denker gekostet sich von der Vorstellung des Chaos zu dem wahren platonischen Begriff der *materia informis* durchzubringen." But cf. N. Kaufmann, *art. cit.*, p. 150.

and Stoic elements were combined with Platonism.”<sup>100</sup> This matter has the potentiality of receiving a form—*formabilis, capax formarum, capax formationis, quod potest accipere formam*—whereby it would be placed in the category of beings.<sup>101</sup>

The second act on the part of God is that by which all things are fashioned at least according to their *genera* from the *materia informis*.<sup>102</sup> This is done through the accession of the form. The creation of the *materia informis* must not be imagined, however, as existing prior in the order of time to its formation into *genera*. Creation and formation took place at the same time; in other words, matter was co-created with the universe.<sup>103</sup> God created all things according to limitations of time, space, and degree (*modus*); according to form, species, and beauty (*species*), and according to order (*ordo*).<sup>104</sup>

In reference to the constitution of man (the presence of the soul has been discussed in its proper place) it is not very clear whether St. Augustine followed Plato the full length in determining the relation of the soul to the body. The soul, according to Plato, had existence before its union with the body; nor was a union with the body its natural condition and original destination. The soul is for the body what a mechanical motor is for a vehicle; it furnishes the power which moves and directs it. Or, to make use of another analogy, the soul employs the body as an artisan does his instrument. Hence, its union with the body is accidental, and not substantial; for the soul is a complete substance in the body as it was before its union with the body. And thus man is defined, according

<sup>100</sup> A. H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 179.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), pp. 25 ff.

<sup>102</sup> O'Toole, *ibid.*, pp. 29 ff.

<sup>103</sup> *Contra adv. legis et Proph.*, I, 9, 12 (PL 2, 610): “Nec putandus est Deus informem prius fecisse materiam, et intervallo aliquo interposito temporis formasse quod informe prius fecerat; sed sicut a loquente fiunt verba sonantia, ubi non prius vox informis post accipit formam, sed formata profertur; ita intelligendus est Deus de materia quidem informi fecisse mundum, sed simul eam concreasse cum mundo. Non tamen inutiliter prius narratur unde aliquid fit, et postea quod inde fit; quia etsi potest utrumque simul fieri, non simul potest utrumque narrari.” So also *Confess.*, XIII, 33, 48 (PL 32, 866). Cf. J. Martin, *St. Augustin* (Paris: 1923), p. 309.

<sup>104</sup> W. J. Roche, *art. cit.*, 350 ff.

to Platonic *Apocrypha*, as a "soul using a body."<sup>105</sup> In the teaching of Aristotle the soul is likewise the cause of motion for the body, but it is more than that since it is its principle of life, its substantial form. In other words, the soul constitutes together with the body one human substance which is at the same time sensible and spiritual. Hence, according to the doctrine of Aristotle, the soul remains an incomplete substance.

Some investigators believe that St. Augustine's constitution of man can be made to fit into the pattern of the Aristotelian exposition.<sup>106</sup> One of the principal texts which is adduced approximates closely to the Aristotelian sense. Augustine constantly teaches that man is a rational substance composed of body and soul,<sup>107</sup> and this in such a manner that no one element of these two principles is man, but only something of man—a something which belongs to man as a partial constituent of his nature.<sup>108</sup> Wherefore the whole man is by essence a composite of spirit and flesh.<sup>109</sup> Those who make Augustine's doctrine coincide with that of Aristotle see in the writings of the Bishop passages which make the body and soul equally contribute and coalesce to form the whole human nature.<sup>110</sup> The soul too, they say, corresponds to that principle which is called in Aristotelian terminology the form of the body. The passage which is most pertinent and which is invoked as corroborating these views is the following:

In this order it is understood that form (*speciem*) is given, by the highest essence, to the body through the soul, by which it is, in as much as it is. The body, therefore, subsists through the soul, and it is by the

<sup>105</sup> A. E. Taylor, *Plato the Man and his Work* (London: 1948), p. 525.

<sup>106</sup> So N. Kaufmann, *art. cit.*, 152 f., and the authors he quotes in his favor.

<sup>107</sup> *De Trinit.*, XV, 7, 11 (PL 42, 1065).

<sup>108</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 47, 9 (PL 35, 1737).

<sup>109</sup> *De quant. anim.*, I, 2 (PL 32, 1036): "Sic cum quaeritur ex quibus sit homo compositus, respondere possum, ex anima et corpore." *Sermo* 150, 4 (PL 38, 810): "Homo ergo, quod nemo ambigit, constat ex anima et corpore . . . sed non qualicunque anima, nam et pecus constat ex anima et corpore: homo ergo constans ex anima rationali et carne mortali."

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Jerome de Paris, "La nature de l'âme et de l'âme humaine d'après saint Augustin," *Etudis franciscans* XLII (1930), 317; *id.*, "De unione animae humanae cum corpore in doctrina Divi Augustini," *Acta Hebdomadae Augustiniana* (Rome: 1931), pp. 271-311.



very thing by which it is animated. . . . But if the soul gives form (*speciem*) to the body, that it be a body in as much as it is, giving its form, it does not take anything away.<sup>111</sup>

Although the meaning of St. Augustine's Latin *species* cannot be determined with precision, it can most frequently be rendered by the term "form," and that in the Aristotelian signification.<sup>112</sup> St. Augustine himself defines his *species* as that "by which a thing is that which it is."<sup>113</sup> And thus the species of St. Augustine would correspond to the *εἶδος* of Aristotle.<sup>114</sup>

The greatest difficulty in agreeing to this interpretation lies in this, that it cannot be harmonized with what Augustine says in reference to the time of the creation of the soul. In his commentaries on Genesis he teaches that the soul was created in that period when all other things were created, but on the sixth day. The soul was created before the body and it lay hidden in the works of God. God unites the soul with the body which is to be formed with the passage of time.<sup>115</sup> In this there is a re-echo of Plato. Such a soul must necessarily be a complete substance and cannot be united to the body as a form of the body. Wherefore St. Thomas<sup>116</sup> and

<sup>111</sup> *De immort. animae*, XV, 24 (PL 32, 1033): "Hoc autem ordine intelligitur a summa essentia speciem corpori per animam tribui, qua est in quantumcumque est. Per animam ergo corpus subsistit, et eo ipso est quo animatur. . . . Quod si tradit speciem anima corpori, ut sit corpus in quantum est, non utique speciem tradendo adimit."

<sup>112</sup> W. J. Roche, *art. cit.*, 355: "'Species' means primarily external appearance, and secondarily idea, similitude, beauty, or logical species. Augustine's use of the term is always obscure, falling between the notions of form and beauty, almost as if the two were identical. But many passages in Augustine are unintelligible unless we understand species to mean form, the propriety by which an entity is what it is as distinguished from all others."

<sup>113</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 6 (PL 41, 231; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 329): "Deinde viderunt omnem speciem . . . qua est quidquid illud est."

<sup>114</sup> M. Willmann, *Geschichte des Idealismus* (2 ed.; Brunswick: 1907), II, 289.

<sup>115</sup> *De Gen. ad Lit.*, VII, 24, 35 (PL 34, 368; CSEL 28 ed. J. Zycha, I, 222).

<sup>116</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 90, a. 4: "Posset autem utique hoc tolerari secundum eos qui ponunt quod anima habet per se speciem et naturam completam; et quod non unitur corpori ut forma, sed solum ad ipsum ministrandum." Cf. A. C. Pegis, *Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: 1948), Introduction, p. XXI: "This is the position which St. Thomas attributes to Plato and to St. Augustine."

more recent investigators—such as Gardeil,<sup>117</sup> Pegis,<sup>118</sup> O'Toole<sup>119</sup>—point out that the soul of St. Augustine is a complete substance and hence cannot be interpreted rightly in the manner of Aristotle.

While St. Augustine repudiates some doctrines of Platonism and Neoplatonism and deviates from others, there were many things in these philosophers which were common to the Fathers and acceptable to St. Augustine as a Christian writer. The Bishop of Hippo regarded the Neoplatonists with respect.<sup>120</sup> In the *Enneads* of Plotinus he was able to remove serious obstacles to his further progress in religion; namely, he discovered the spiritual nature of God and a solution of the problem of evil.<sup>121</sup> Of all ancient philosophers he recommended the Platonic philosophers as the best because of their approximation to the Christian concept of God.<sup>122</sup> Many points of doctrine on the nature, knowability and attributes of God offered by the Neoplatonists coincide with the teaching of St. Augustine not only in matter but also in phraseology.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>117</sup> A. Gardeil, *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique* (Paris: 1927), I, 171, n. 5: "Pour Saint Augustin, dès le sixième jour, il y a un être complet, achevé, un mens."

<sup>118</sup> A. C. Pegis, "In Defence of St. Augustine," *The New Scholasticism*, XVIII (1944), 98: "True enough, St. Augustine regularly maintained what appears to be a Platonic conception of the soul as a complete substance joined to the body in order to contribute to its good rather than its own."

<sup>119</sup> C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1944), p. 91.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. e.g., *Confess.*, VII, 20, 26 (PL 32, 198; ed. M. Skutella, 149); *ibid.*, VII, 9, 13 (PL 32, 740; ed. M. Skutella, 137); *ibid.*, VIII, 2, 3 (PL 32, 750; ed. M. Skutella, 154).

<sup>121</sup> Cf. B. Switalski, *Plotinus and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), p. 70.

<sup>122</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 5 (PL 41, 230; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 328): ". . . Platonis philosophis cedant, quit verum Deum, et rerum auctorem, et veritatis illustratorem, et beautitudinis largitorem esse dixerunt; . . ." Cf. V. J. Bourke, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

<sup>123</sup> The God of Plotinus whom he calls "The One" is sheer spirituality and should therefore in no way be conceived as corporeal. (*Enn.*, VI, 9, 3 [Volkmann, II, 511]). For this reason God is absolutely simple, that is He is devoid of any composition. (*Enn.*, V, 5, 4 [Volkmann, II, 210]; *Enn.*, II, 9, 1 [Volkmann I, 184]). God is the source of all being. (*Enn.*, V, 2, 1 [Volkmann, II, 176]). He is the measure and the limit of all things. (*Enn.*, I, 8, 2 [Volkmann, I, 100]). He is ineffably different from all we know. (*Enn.*, V, 3, 13 [Volkmann, II, 196]). Hence we are not allowed to attribute to "the One" thinking, willing, or even existence as we do to the creatures we know. (*Enn.*, III, 8, 10 [Volkmann, I, 344]. Cf. also: *Enn.*, V, 6, 2 [Volkmann, II, 223]; *Enn.*, V, 3, 12 [Volkmann, II, 194 ff.]; *Enn.*, I, 7, 1

Through their conception of God as a pure spirit the works of Plotinus had taught the Saint to conceive God as an immaterial substance and thereby had furnished a basically new orientation to his religious thought and a new foundation for his system of theology. Their writings opened for him a vista in which a rather noble image of God was granted him, and they paved the way to the ideal of happiness for which his soul had already long yearned. For, according to the teaching of Plotinus, God Himself is happiness,<sup>124</sup> since He is the Highest Good.<sup>125</sup> He who can elevate himself above the sensual through his intellectual powers and unite himself with God will attain happiness.

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[Volkman, I, 96 f.]). Since "the One" cannot be defined in positive terms, it can be described only negatively. (*Enn.*, VI, 8, 11 [Volkman, II, 493]).

<sup>124</sup> *Enn.*, I, 6, 7, (ed. Volkman, I, 92 f.).

<sup>125</sup> *Enn.*, I, 7, 1, (ed. Volkman, I, 96 f.). Cf. St. Augustine, *De mor. Ecc. Cath.*, I, 8, 13 (PL 32, 1316); *ibid.*, I, 25, 46 (1330); *Enar. in Ps.* 70, 2, 6 (PL 36, 896); *Enar. in Ps.* 134, 6 (PL 37, 1742), *De lib. arb.*, II, 15, 39 (PL 32, 1262).

## CHAPTER XI

### THEOLOGY AND AUGUSTINIAN PHILOSOPHY

IT is evident that philosophy played no small role in establishing the concepts and in developing the doctrine of the divine omnipresence. While the inspired word of God teaches most clearly that God is everywhere and insinuates to some extent the mode of that presence, it leaves the more scientific explanation of the manner of that presence to reason and philosophy. The Fathers made use of a simple and traditional philosophy to express the manner in which God is present in the universe. They proceeded, by analogies and comparisons, from the mode of presence of lower beings to the mode of presence of higher beings; from sensible beings to supersensible beings. Their philosophical speculations start with the material beings which surround us; from there they proceed to the more remote spiritual substance, namely the human soul, and from these they progress to the elucidation of the most remote and highest being.

If the earliest Fathers have inaugurated the use of Platonic philosophy to elucidate, in a rational manner, what Sacred Scripture has to say on the presence of God, then St. Augustine, as it were with one sweep, perfected the whole structure of philosophy around this doctrine for the rest of the patristic period. He clearly determined and established the hierarchical order of presences, dependent upon the hierarchical and metaphysical order of divers beings; namely: 1. material beings having quantitative extension, 2. the soul, being a spirit but mutable, and 3. God, being a pure spirit but absolutely immutable. Underlying these explanations, comparisons, and analogies is philosophy, which St. Augustine exploited to the full in default of a fuller presentation of the manner of God's presence by the Sacred Scriptures.



From the place accorded to it in his religious writings it is evident that St. Augustine put a high value on philosophy. Augustine's philosophical thought does not present, strictly speaking, a system of philosophy, but it forms a homogeneous whole of rich and ever productive ideas.<sup>1</sup> If any one in the patristic period can be credited with having formed a Christian philosophy it is Augustine.<sup>2</sup> He transformed and accommodated what he and the Fathers believed to be the best of extant philosophies to the needs of Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Like Plato, who was never intent upon "system-making"—upon formulating a definite set of doctrines<sup>4</sup>—so Augustine never contemplated a system of his own philosophy.<sup>5</sup> If the philosophy of St. Thomas founded upon the more systematic Aristotle cannot be said to be a system but rather a wisdom,<sup>6</sup> much less that of St. Augustine falls under the title of system. Nevertheless Augustine proves himself to be the greatest philosopher of the

<sup>1</sup> A. H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> E. Bréhier, *Histoire de la philosophie* (Paris: 1926-28), I, 521, maintains that from the time of St. Paul to Pseudo-Dionysius, the Areopagite, "on ne peut dire qu'il y ait eu en cette période une philosophie chrétienne."

<sup>3</sup> G. Quadri, *Il pensiero filosofico di S. Agostino* (Firenze: 1934), p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. A. E. Taylor, *Plato the Man and his Work* (London: 1948), p. 23; F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), p. 140; Ueberweg-Praechter, *Die Philosophie des Altertums* (Berlin: 1926), p. 260: "Platon ist ein Werdender gewesen sein Leben lang."

<sup>5</sup> M. de la Taille, *The Mystery of Faith* (New York: 1940), p. IX: "A system and a body of doctrine are poles apart. A body of doctrine is certainly coherent, just as truth is coherent. No one element of it can be in opposition to another, and, if we are concerned with necessary elements, no one element can be sacrificed without the loss of another, so much so that you tear down the whole building, so to speak, if you remove a single stone. Such is the glory of truth at its summit, without the admixture of any prejudgments resting on error."

A system however is quite a different thing. It is not deduced from the first principles of the branch of knowledge in question, . . . inferring therefrom manifold conclusions, from the complexus of which arises a new increment of knowledge, a new birth; a system is merely a hypothetical explanation of things impossible of demonstration; not having a principle of demonstration, it merely provides a form or mold for the elements in question, a mold formed and conceived by the mind artificially by the help of which we can conveniently unite and co-adapt the elements according to our scheme."

<sup>6</sup> G. B. Phelan, "The Existentialism of St. Thomas," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, XXI (1946), 25.

patristic era.<sup>7</sup> As has been pointed out, he made copious use of Neoplatonic philosophy in his many writings.<sup>8</sup> If Platonism and Neoplatonism survived vigorously in the Latin West during the whole patristic period and were inherited by the School-men at a time when the *Enneads* of Plotinus were inaccessible to the Occidental world, this was, in the main, the merit of St. Augustine.

Augustine's religious thought is permeated with philosophy. With its aid he argues and defends, defines and proves. Through it he draws conclusions that are latent in revelation. By means of it he co-ordinates and systematizes religious truths. If he has merited the title of the most speculative theologian of the Fathers, it is precisely on account of his extensive, adroit, and orthodox use of philosophy for the purposes of revelation. Philosophy itself, therefore, aside from the first few professedly philosophical works written in Cassiciacum immediately after his conversion, was not his explicit aim.<sup>9</sup> It merely served the Bishop as a background and technique for the expression of his theology.<sup>10</sup>

This ancillary character of philosophy will be found at a much later date, when the role of philosophy was more pronounced among medieval theologians, who did not undertake the task of elaborating philosophy for its own sake. "This philosophy of St. Thomas, for example, lived and moved within the domain of theology because it was a teacher and disciple of revealed wisdom that St. Thomas wanted to be, rather than a philosopher."<sup>11</sup> Like all knowledge, for St. Augustine, it was to be subordinate to, and

<sup>7</sup> Cf. M. Grabmann, *Geschichte der katholischen Theologie* (Freiburg in Br.: 1933), p. 21: "Der hl. Augustinus, der grösste Philosoph der Väterzeit . . ." W. P. Tolley, *The Idea of God in the Philosophy of St. Augustine* (New York: 1930), p. VII evaluates him as "a philosopher of the first rank." H. Pope, *St. Augustine of Hippo* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 253, adorns him with the title "Prince of Philosophers and Theologians."

<sup>8</sup> Cf. F. van Steenberghe, "La philosophie de S. Augustin," *Revue Néo-Scholastique*, XXXV (1933), 122.

<sup>9</sup> J. Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, tr. by B. Wale and Margos R. Adamson (New York: 1928), pp. 368-69: "On no occasion does he consider the object of his researches in the specific light of purely rational speculation."

<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: 1944), p. 43.

<sup>11</sup> A. C. Pegis, "The Middle Ages and Philosophy," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, XXI (1946), 19.

instrumental in the attainment of a blissful and everlasting life.<sup>12</sup> "He wanted a philosophy that would 'work' in his hands, or rather through his pen and his voice, for the salvation of men's souls."<sup>13</sup> This is uppermost in his mind: it is the goal of all his episcopal labors and of his philosophical and theological writings. The eternal happiness of the soul consists in the attainment and possession, through vision and fruition, of the eternal and immutable Truth, of which all philosophical truths are but a reflection, and to which they lead.

All who are conversant with the philosophical thought of St. Augustine and the uses to which he puts it discover, that there is one over-all aim common to his philosophy and his theology, and that is the attainment of a spiritual good. The philosophy of St. Augustine, is, in the words of Windelband, a metaphysics of the inward life, or in the words of Gilson, a metaphysics of conversion. "The Augustinian ideal," states Pegis, "was from the beginning a dominantly contemplative one."<sup>14</sup> Nay, the African Bishop simply makes philosophy identical with religion,<sup>15</sup> and a true philosopher, a lover of God.<sup>16</sup> For Augustine "all truths, natural and supernatural, tend to draw the soul toward God and piety."<sup>17</sup> We must, therefore, always keep in mind "the double character of his philosophy, the cosmic and the religious. It aspires at once to give a complete account of reality and to be a guide to the spiritual life. Of course, these two aspects cannot be sharply separated."<sup>18</sup> And

<sup>12</sup> G. Santayana, *The Life of Reason* (New York: 1924), p. 151: "Philosophy was only one phase of Augustine's genius; with him it was an instrument of zeal and a stepping-stone to salvation."

<sup>13</sup> H. Pope, *St. Augustine of Hippo* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 153.

<sup>14</sup> A. C. Pegis, "In Defense of St. Augustine," *The New Scholasticism* XVIII (1944), 113. And he adds: "We must say that philosophical ideas are for Augustine ministers of the spiritual life; rather than teach the intellect, they enable it to unite itself more intimately with God."

<sup>15</sup> *De vera rel.* 5, 8 (PL 34, 126): "Sic enim creditur et docetur, quod est humanae salutis caput, non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiae studium, et aliam religionem."

<sup>16</sup> *De civ. Dei* VIII, 1 (PL 41, 224; ed. Dombart-Kalb I, 320): ". . . sed cum philosophis est habenda collatio; quorum ipsum nomen si latine interpretemur, amorem sapientiae profitetur. Porro si sapientia Deus est, . . . verus philosophus est amator Dei."

<sup>17</sup> B. Świtalski, *Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), p. 36.

<sup>18</sup> A. H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), p. 179.

again, "there is not and cannot be any separation between philosophy and theology."<sup>19</sup>

How is this Augustinian orientation to be explained in the light of the philosophy or systems of philosophy which antecede his time but which exerted their influence upon human thought up to his time? Greek sages, in general, were given over to the theoretical aims and scope of philosophy. The sophists viewed it as a systematic but theoretical activity of the mind.<sup>20</sup> For Plato philosophy is the knowledge (*epistême*) of ideas—of those things which are eternal and immutable—in opposition to appearances (*dôxa*) of things that are material, mutable, and sensible; the object of the former are archetypes, whereas of the latter "images."<sup>21</sup> For Aristotle, it is "not only science or knowledge of causes, but knowledge of the first and most universal causes."<sup>22</sup> It was Cicero who later defined the nature of philosophy along these theoretical lines, when he said that philosophers are those who devote themselves to the study of the profounder causes of things.<sup>23</sup> Cicero, who, through his philosophical work *Hortensius* aroused an ardent desire in the youthful Augustine to pursue the study of philosophy, accepted the doctrine of the Stoics that happiness consists in a life of virtue.<sup>24</sup> This virtue is of a practical nature, i.e., it is to be practiced in living. Virtuous conduct is more noble and valuable than the knowledge of virtue, i.e., speculative virtue.

The foundations for Neoplatonic philosophy, which was transformed into a definitely religious philosophy in the *Enneads* of Plotinus, is to be sought in the trend of the teaching of the Stoics.<sup>25</sup> Philosophy was no longer confined to the theoretical sphere of the intellect, but was concerned above all with conduct. Its primary

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>20</sup> R. Eisler, *Wörterbuch der philosophischen Begriffe* (4th ed.; Berlin: 1929), II, 436.

<sup>21</sup> F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1948), p. 152.

<sup>22</sup> W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (5th ed.; London: 1949), p. 154. *Metaph.* VI, 1: "We are seeking the principles and the causes of the things that are, and obviously of them *qua* being." Ed. R. McKeon, *The Basic Words of Aristotle* (New York: 1941), p. 778.

<sup>23</sup> *Tuscul. disput.*, V, 3, 8.

<sup>24</sup> *De off.*, I, 44, 158.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa, Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung* (Göttingen: 1948), pp. 453 ff.



object was virtue,<sup>26</sup> which consisted in living so that one's actions would be in harmony with the laws of nature—hence their maxim: "Live according to the laws of nature." In the philosophy of Plotinus, the attainment of man's last end, the highest good, in which consists his happiness "is possible only by moral acts through self-discipline and by purification."<sup>27</sup> And Plotinus drew not only from Plato and Aristotle, but also from the prominent representative of Stoic philosophy, Posidonius.<sup>28</sup>

In like manner, philosophy was, for St. Augustine, not a theoretical knowledge to be used for solving problems stemming from the universe; it was not a series of views relative to the world and life, but it was a norm of life, a rule of action in accordance with the rational nature of man for the attainment of happiness.<sup>29</sup> God is the author not only of a physical order in the universe, but also of an ethical or moral order. While both orders are equally important from a metaphysical standpoint, it is by observing the moral order that man attains his highest good, and by attaining God, the purpose of the existence of both orders is fulfilled.<sup>30</sup> As Augustine himself states, a blessed life is "that one great object toward which the labor, vigilance, and industry of all philosophers seem to have been directed."<sup>31</sup>

St. Augustine's deep concern over the role that philosophy

<sup>26</sup> Seneca, *Ep.*, 87, 7: "Philosophia studium virtutis est, sed per ipsam virtutem." *Id.*, *Frag.*, 17: "Philosophia nihil aliud est quam recta vivendi ratio vel honeste vivendi scientia vel ars rectae vitae agenda; non errabimus, si dixerimus philosophiam esse legem bene honesteque vivendi, et qui dixerit illam regulam vitae, suum illi nomen reddidit."

<sup>27</sup> G. Świtalski, *Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. M. W. Theiler, *Die Vorbereitung des Neoplatonismus* (Berlin: 1930), pp. 61–109; P. O. Kristeller, *Der Begriff der Seele in der Ethik des Plotin* (Tübingen: 1929), p. 104; however J. Barion, *Plotin und Augustinus: Untersuchungen zum Gottesproblem* (Berlin: 1935), pp. 28 f. denies any influence of Posidonius upon Plotinus.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. B. Świtalski, *Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), pp. 36 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *De ord.*, I, 9, 27 (PL 32, 990; CSEL 63, 139): "ordo est, quem si tenuerimus in vita, perducet ad Deum."

<sup>31</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 3 (PL 41, 227; ed. Dombart-Kalb I, 323): "Beata vita . . . propter quam unam omnium philosophorum invigilasse ac laborasse videtur industria." English translation in text from *Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, ed. by W. J. Oates (New York: 1948), II, 103.

should play in promoting virtue and the proper conduct of life is evident from his succinct historical notes on Greek philosophers in his *De civitate Dei*.<sup>32</sup> In recounting the doctrines of the philosophers leading up to Plato, he practically measures their greatness in proportion to what they had to say on virtue. In connection with Pythagoras, he commends "those who seemed to excel others by the laudable manner in which they regulated their lives," and on this account they were called sages. Referring to the Ionic school, he mentions the seven sages of that group, six of whom "were distinguished by the kind of life they lived, and by certain maxims which they gave forth for the proper conduct of life."

Augustine also lauds Socrates because this philosopher wished "to direct his mind to the discovery of something manifest and certain, which was necessary in order to obtain a blessed life"; on the other hand, "he was (as some interpret) unwilling that minds undefiled with earthly desires should essay to raise themselves upward to divine things." Praise is due to him, says Augustine, for having directed "the entire effort of philosophy to the correction and regulation of morals" in preference to those philosophers who preceded him and who "expended their greatest efforts in the investigation of physical, that is, natural phenomena." It was also a blessing that his type of philosophy stimulated many disciples, "who vied with one another in desire for proficiency in handling those moral questions which concern the chief good (*summum bonum*), the possession of which can make a man blessed."

Finally coming to the man whom he appraises most highly among the Greek masters of thought, he says: "To Plato is given the praise of having perfected philosophy by combining both parts (action and contemplation) into one. He then divides it into three parts—the first moral, which is chiefly occupied with action; the second natural, of which the object is contemplation; and the third rational, which discriminates between the true and false." If, for St. Augustine, "Plato was the one who shone with glory which far excelled that of the others, and who not unjustly eclipsed them all," then it was principally because he defined the wise man "as one who imitates, knows, loves this God, and who is rendered

<sup>32</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 2, 3, 4 (PL 41, 227; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 321-22) Eng. trans., *op. cit.*, 101-4.

blessed through fellowship with Him in His own blessedness.”<sup>33</sup>

The point of departure for St. Augustine is the all-important desire in man for happiness. Although it is eternal happiness which is most frequently upon his lips and towards which he strives through religious knowledge and conduct, St. Augustine is of the opinion that that happiness begins and is attained in this life.<sup>34</sup> Of course, not in its fullness as it is when God is possessed face to face, but in part, inasmuch as in this life He is attained through imperfect knowledge and faith. It is the relation between the imperfect and the perfect, the beginning and the consummation, happiness in part and happiness in full.

All things take their origin from God by creation from nothingness, and they return to God. This doctrine of St. Augustine is adopted and developed by St. Thomas. Aquinas expresses it by a certain “circular motion” (*motus circularis*) or *circulatio*.<sup>35</sup> This circular movement or return to God of creatures is imperfect in irrational creatures, for they do not attain to their highest Good from which they proceed except in bearing a certain distant likeness to Him; it is perfect, however, in rational creatures because they can attain God on account of their rational nature by knowledge and love.<sup>36</sup> In this doctrine there is a reflection of the teaching of Plotinus according to whom all things proceed from “the One” and are to return to “the One” for their happiness. The return is already accomplished, according to St. Augustine and other Christian writers, here upon earth by various acts and stages, but imperfectly, whereas it is consummated through the ultimate act of the beatific vision.

The whole man is oriented toward the supreme desire of being happy. All the functions of the spirit—not only volitional, but also cognitive—are co-ordinated in the quest of happiness. There are diverse acts in man, each proceeding from its own faculty, but tending to, and finding its satiation in, the same goal. Philosophy, according to St. Augustine, is involved in this conception of man, his soul and his quest of happiness. It is true that while happiness

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, VIII, 5 (PL 41, 227; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 327).

<sup>34</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 1 (PL 41, 224; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 321).

<sup>35</sup> In IV, d. 49, q. 1, a. 3, q. 1, sol. 1.

<sup>36</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 65, a. 2.

springs directly from the will, philosophy pertains directly to the domain of the intellect. The object of philosophy belongs not to the volitional but to the intentional order and consists in the subjective representation of reality in the form of truth. And thus it will be its province to know what happiness is, and to teach men how to be happy.<sup>37</sup> "*Nulla est homini causa philosophandi, nisi ut beatus sit.*"<sup>38</sup>

Summarily St. Augustine's position may be stated thus: there is one fundamental law of life, and that is the urge for happiness; the diverse functions of the soul, even those which appear to be purely theoretical, cannot be unrelated to this most fundamental desire in man. Thus conduct and intellect, morality and theoretical knowledge must participate and co-operate in the actions and life of one striving to be happy. And who is there without this relentless urge for happiness?

From such a conception of philosophy, in which the desire and pursuit of happiness are contained or involved, it follows that not all truths have equal value in the life of man. The truth that leads more directly to the attainment of happiness, that is to a knowledge of God here below and to a fruition of Him above, is more noble and of greater value than other truths that are less related to God.

Moreover, the eudemonistic factor in philosophy serves as a gauge for truth. If the attainment of knowledge for its own sake were the object of philosophy, and the element of happiness did not enter that knowledge as a directive, then our knowledge would be unlimited and indeterminate. It would be difficult, if not impossible to satiate the mind of man. Man would not know whether he possesses enough knowledge, nor would he know what attitude and orientation to take towards it. Once, however, the eudemonistic factor enters into the sphere of knowledge, it brings with it a sense of direction, determination, and sufficiency. It also provides a certain norm for truth. Man, his actions, his wants, and desires become the focal point of orientation.<sup>39</sup>

Philosophy, therefore, in St. Augustine's works is not merely a theoretical science of truth, but also the practical art of living.

<sup>37</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XVIII, 39 (PL 41, 599; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 315): "Philosophia quae se docere aliquid profitetur, unde fiant homines beati. . . ."

<sup>38</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XIX, 1, 3 (PL 41, 623).

<sup>39</sup> E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin* (2me ed.; Paris: 1943), pp. 149-50.



Nay, it is life itself. It teaches how to live in order to be happy here, and attain everlasting happiness hereafter. While the theoretical and practical elements enter the concept of philosophy, the former elements are made subordinate to the practical factors as a means is to an end. Consequently philosophy has as its object not only the true (*verum*) but also the good (*bonum*). Thus philosophy is nothing else but the love of wisdom,<sup>40</sup> and wisdom is nothing else but the love of good. But one cannot properly and ordinately love some particular good without loving at the same time the highest Good. For the particular good is a participation of the highest Good, and the recognition of participated goodness involves the recognition of the source of all goodness—the *bonum omnis boni*. Therefore in loving and attaining the highest Good (*Summum Bonum*) is to be found man's partial happiness in this life and consummate bliss in the next life.<sup>41</sup>

To be sure, the term "wisdom" contains a complexity of elements in the writings of the Bishop of Hippo. For he names God Himself<sup>42</sup> and every single person of the Trinity,<sup>43</sup> "Wisdom"; besides, he predicates this term as an attribute of the divine Being.<sup>44</sup> Now wisdom in man is a participation in the wisdom of God.<sup>45</sup> It consists in a condition of the soul which possesses truth,<sup>46</sup> and indeed that truth which constitutes the beatifying object of man, which lies in the contemplation of God.<sup>47</sup> Wisdom is, no doubt, knowledge and a consequent joy flowing spontaneously from the possession of truth, which solves existing difficulties and problems, and even here approaches to the highest Truth; but the consummation of wisdom lies in "the vision and contemplation of truth."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, I (PL 41, 224; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 320).

<sup>41</sup> *De lib. arb.*, II, 9, 26 (PL 32, 1254): "Nemo enim beatus est, nisi summo bono, quod in ea veritate, quam sapientiam vocamus, cernitur et tenetur."

<sup>42</sup> *Sol.*, I, 1 (PL 32, 870): *Deus Sapientia!* *De Civ. Dei*, VIII, 1 (PL 41, 225; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 321); *De Trinit.*, XIV, 1, 1 (PL 42, 1035).

<sup>43</sup> *De Trinit.*, VII, 3, 4 (PL 42, 937-38); F. Cayré, *La contemplation Augustinienne* (Paris: 1927), pp. 48 ff.

<sup>44</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, lib. imp., XVI, 58 (PL 34, 242-43; CSEL 28, I, 499-500); *De serm. Dom. in monte*, 2, 3 (PL 34, 1275); *Enar. in Ps.* 103, 4, 2 (PL 37, 1378).

<sup>45</sup> *De Trinit.*, XIV, 12, 15 (PL 42, 1048).

<sup>46</sup> *De beata vita*, 4, 33 (PL 32, 975): *modus animi*.

<sup>47</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 135, 8 (PL 37, 1760): "intelligimus sapientiam in cognitione et dilectione ejus quod semper est . . . quod est Deus."

<sup>48</sup> *De serm. Dom. in monte*, 1, 3, 10 (PL 34, 1234): "Sapientia id est con-

And what does the soul more ardently desire, asks St. Augustine, than truth? <sup>49</sup> In the strict sense, therefore, wisdom cannot be attained in this life, i.e., in its fullness; in a wider sense, it is already possessed here below according to the degree of perfection of the individual.<sup>50</sup>

However, Augustinian wisdom extends itself beyond the domain of pure speculative and theoretical thought. For by it, according to St. Augustine, man not only conducts himself in conformity with the rules of life in the light of reason, as one does through the virtue of prudence,<sup>51</sup> but also attains to the highest supernatural virtues of a Christian life.<sup>52</sup> In this latter sense it is synonymous with supernatural perfection and is a gift of God.<sup>53</sup> Wisdom, therefore, has not only the static meaning of contemplation, but also the dynamic sense of practical living. Both, however, are co-ordinated since it is through the one that we attain the other. Divine wisdom established not only the physical order but also the moral.<sup>54</sup> In this practical dynamic meaning, wisdom is synonymous with philosophy.<sup>55</sup>

Wisdom or philosophy practically means a conduct of life which is in harmony with Christian ideals: philosophy is Christian living. This is the sense which occurs in his dialogues at Cassiciacum. St. Augustine relates, how, with great joy, he found the beauties of philosophy in the Epistles of St. Paul.<sup>56</sup> This is true, inasmuch as Augustine has learned at this time to make philosophy

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templatio veritatis, pacificans totum hominem et suscipiens similitudinem Dei."

<sup>49</sup> *In Io. Ev. tr.* 26, 5 (PL 35, 1609): "Quid enim fortius desiderat anima, quam veritatem."

<sup>50</sup> Cf. H. I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris: 1949), pp. 564 ff.

<sup>51</sup> *De lib. arb.*, II, 9, 25 (PL 32, 1254).

<sup>52</sup> F. Cayré, *La contemplation Augustinienne* (Paris: 1927), p. 110: "il la regarde comme le couronnement des vertus chrétiennes et des plus hautes, la foi et la charité."

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>54</sup> *De div. quaest.*, 83, q. 79, 1 (PL 40, 90): "Est enim lex universitatis divina sapientia."

<sup>55</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 25 (PL 41, 338; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 496).

<sup>56</sup> *Contra Acad.*, II, 2 (PL 32, 921 f.): "Itaque titubans, properans, haesitans arripio apostolum Paulum. Perlegi totum intentissime atque cautissime. Tunc vero quantulumcumque jam lumine asperso, tanta se mihi philosophiae facies aperuit, ut . . . eam demonstrare potuissem."

synonymous with the rules and ideals of living contained in Christian faith. It is in this sense that, speaking of his mother, St. Monica, and of the faith and morals she professed, he says "Thy philosophy." It is in this sense likewise that he distinguishes between true, i.e., Christian philosophy and the philosophers of this world who are devoid of Christian ideals. In the disputations at Cassiciacum, he addresses himself thus to Monica, his patient Mother:

Mother, you know the meaning of the Greek term 'philosophy,' in Latin 'love of wisdom.' Now those Sacred Scriptures which you have taken so deeply to heart tell us not to despise or jeer at philosophers, but only at the philosophers of this world. . . . Since, then, you love that true philosophy much more than you love me—and well do I know how much you love me; since, too, you have made such progress in that true philosophy that you have no longer any dread of fortune's mischances, not even of death itself, though those are things which fill with dismay even the most learned men, since, too, all will acknowledge that therein lies the supreme goal of philosophy, why then should I not gladly call myself your disciple.<sup>57</sup>

The use of the term wisdom in St. Augustine approximates to that of Sacred Scripture. Hebrew wisdom of the Old Testament, unlike Greek philosophy, does not aim at knowledge as an end in itself. She is always considered from a religious and ethical standpoint. The problems of wisdom are not speculative and theoretical, but are of a practical nature dealing with the relationship of man to God.<sup>58</sup>

This wisdom is further correlated with the subsisting Wisdom of God the Father, that is the true Son of God.<sup>59</sup> It cannot be said that man lives well and profitably unless life is at the same time conducive to eternal living.<sup>60</sup> The element of other-worldliness and the ever-present thought of an eternal life are dominant and pervading factors of Augustine's thought and religion. Further-

<sup>57</sup> *De ord.*, I, 11, 32 (PL 32, 993-94).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Cornill, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (5 ed.; Tübingen: 1905); p. 260; P. Heinisch, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Münster: 1912), p. XXXVIII.

<sup>59</sup> *Contra Acad.*, II, 1 (PL 32, 919); cf. C. Boyer, *Christianisme et néoplatonisme dans la formation de S. Augustin* (Paris: 1920), p. 157.

<sup>60</sup> *In Io. Ev.*, tr. 45, 2 (PL 35, 1720): "Ad hoc enim debet uncuique prodesse bene vivere, ut detur illi semper vivere; nam cui non datur semper vivere, quid prodest bene vivere?"

more, there cannot be true hope of living forever, unless He is recognized in our lives who is life eternal, Jesus Christ.<sup>61</sup> And those, who find their gratification in truth, happiness, justice, and eternal life are drawn to Christ by almost spontaneous attraction.<sup>62</sup> Subjection of the inferior man to the superior man, that is, of the passion to the intellect, and the subordination of the intellect of man to Christ, Truth itself, pertains to the life of a consummate and perfect wise man.<sup>63</sup>

Wisdom, therefore, embraces the intellect and the will, understanding and volition, knowledge and love. In order to merit the name of wisdom, the functions of both of these faculties must have as their object that truth and that love which are directed toward the ultimate Truth and uncreated Charity. "Not unrightly," says the Bishop of Hippo, "do we understand wisdom (to be) in knowing and loving that which always is, and that which always remains unchanged, namely God."<sup>64</sup>

St. Augustine was well aware of the many philosophers who have written much with subtlety upon vice and virtue—"treating, dividing, defining, drawing keen conclusions, filling books"—with the purpose of showing the way to happiness.<sup>65</sup> But he was con-

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*: "Non est autem cuiquam spes vera certa semper vivendi, nisi agnoscat vitam, quod est Christus."

<sup>62</sup> *In Io. Ev., tr.* 26, 4 (PL 35, 1608): "Trahit sua quemque voluptas; non necessitas, sed voluptas; non obligatio, sed delectatio: quanto fortius nos dicere debemus, trahi hominem ad Christum, qui delectatur veritate, delectatur beatitudine, qui delectatur iustitia, delectatur sempiterna vita, quod totum Christus est?"

<sup>63</sup> *De Serm. Dom. in monte*, I, 2, 9 (PL 34, 1233): "Pacifici in semetipsis sunt; qui omnes animi sui motus componentes et subjicientes rationi, id est menti et spiritui, carnalesque concupiscentias habentes edomitas, fiunt regnum Dei: in quo ita sunt ordinata omnia, ut id, quod est in homine praecipuum et excellens, hoc imperet ceteris non reluctantibus, quae sunt nobis bestiisque communia; atque idipsum quod excellit in homine, id est mens et ratio, subjiciatur potiori, quod est ipsa veritas, unigenitus Filius Dei. Neque enim imperare inferioribus potest, nisi superiori se ipse subjiciat. Et haec est pax, quae datur in terra hominibus bonae voluntatis; haec vita consummati perfectique sapientis."

<sup>64</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 135, 8 (PL 37, 1760).

<sup>65</sup> *In Io. Ev., tr.* 45, 3 (PL 35, 1720): "Fuerunt quidam philosophi de virtutibus et vitiis subtilia multa tractantes, dividentes, definientes, ratiocinationes acutissimas concludentes, libros implentes, suam sapientiam buccis crepantibus ventiliantes; qui etiam dicere auderent hominibus: Nos sequimini, sectam nostram tenete, si vultis beate vivere."



vinced that without Christ, it was impossible to draw up a code of ethics, or to construct a moral philosophy which would lead to true happiness. The doctrine and example of Christ are the way of perfection and the road to happiness. Only He who is Man and God could effectively lead us through His manhood to His divinity.<sup>66</sup>

Augustine describes how after his conversion to the Catholic faith he found Christ Jesus, his strength and his Redeemer, to be "sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood; brighter than all light, but more veiled than all mysteries; more exalted than any honor, though not to those who are exalted in their own conceit."<sup>67</sup> The Word assumed a human nature in order to become one of us without ceasing to be what It was. In His Godhead Christ teaches us where we are going, and in His manhood points out the way—"that there might be a way to man's God through a God-man."<sup>68</sup> Augustine says that "if you want to live a pious and Christian life, cleave to Christ in that which for our sake He became, that you may arrive at Him in that which He is and ever was."<sup>69</sup>

This doctrine of St. Augustine that Christ the Man is to lead us through His doctrine and example to Christ the God is the ground-work in the Middle Ages for works written on Christian perfection.<sup>70</sup>

This conception of philosophy allows St. Augustine to distinguish between philosophy and philosophy, and to term one good and another bad. The gage of philosophies is their practical standards of morality as leading to God or to creatures. A philosophy is good when it appraises created things in the light of God, has moral standards which make man virtuous, and leads him to

<sup>66</sup> *In Io. Ev., tr.* 13, 4 (PL 35, 1494): "Si veritatem quaeris, viam tene; nam ipsa est via quae est veritas. Ipsa est quo is; ipsa est qua is; non per aliud is ad aliud, non per aliud venis ad Christum; per Christum ad Christum venis. Quomodo per Christum ad Christum? Per Christum hominem ad Christum Deum: per Verbum carnem factum, ad Verbum quod in principio erat Deus apud Deum."

<sup>67</sup> *Confess.* IX, 1 (PL 32, 763) in *Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, ed. by W. J. Oates, (New York: 1948), I, 128.

<sup>68</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XI, 2 (PL 42, 318): "ut ad hominis Deum iter esset homini per hominem Deum."

<sup>69</sup> *In Io. Ev., tr.* 2, 3 (PL 35, 1390).

<sup>70</sup> Cf. M. Grabmann, *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben* (München: 1926), pp. 517 ff.

eternal salvation. A philosophy is not good when it views creatures according to earthly and temporal standards. For this reason genuine philosophy has as its aim the attainment of truth in that God who is Truth itself and the source of all truth. To attain truth in a consummate manner, that is, to arrive at the very vision or contemplation of God, is the ultimate aim of philosophy and the eternal source of man's happiness.

Augustine even considers philosophy as a certain gift of God. In order to attain philosophy the grace of God is necessary. Such statements are in keeping with his teaching that true philosophy can be found only in Christianity. Some philosophers of antiquity were of course on the road to truth, but they viewed it from a hazy distance, and consequently could possess but an imperfect knowledge of it. A Christian ought to accept from them that which is true, since this is a property of true philosophy, but he must disavow what is false and harmful.<sup>71</sup> The Bishop of Hippo himself is a good example of how a Christian writer has studied, sifted, accepted, and incorporated into Christian thought many truths of the natural order that have been attained by the Greek philosophers.

This Augustinian concept of philosophy explains why both the theology and philosophy of St. Augustine are concerned with charity. Since morality is a part of his theology and his philosophy, both revolve around the theme of charity as a wheel turns around its hub. Any one reading Augustine's works even casually will discover that charity is one of the most important factors in his religious teaching. It would be difficult to define St. Augustine's charity in some simple sentence. Sometimes charity means the love of good, and thus it includes all virtues in itself; more often it refers specifically to God, and thus constitutes a distinct virtue.<sup>72</sup>

Charity is a supernal gift diffused by the Holy Ghost in the souls of the just. It comes from heaven, but it also draws the soul and its actions toward heaven. Just as through creation and the return of creatures to God as to their end a circular movement is brought about, so too through charity a supernatural cycle or

<sup>71</sup> J. R. Nourisson, *La philosophie de S. Augustin* (2me ed.; 1866), I, 75.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. F. Cayré and F. van Steenberghen, *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin*, I, *La Morale Chretienne* (Paris: 1949), p. 87.

*circulatio* is formed. Charity is the great unifying bond in the theology of St. Augustine. It serves as a spiritual and sanctifying bond in more than one way, and that in matters which constitute central doctrines in the writings of St. Augustine. Charity unites man with God;<sup>73</sup> or, by the same token, it unites man to Christ, and thus forms the mystical body of Christ. Of this union we have previously spoken. It also is a unifying element within man: it serves to unify all the aspirations, desires, and actions of man,<sup>74</sup> and thus to direct them to the most desirable and beatifying object, the highest Good. Charity unifies the whole complexus of virtues.<sup>75</sup> For just as the soul unites and gives life to manifold members of the body, so too charity pervades, animates, and gives value to all virtues.<sup>76</sup> Love constitutes the soul of Christian perfection and the wellspring of Christian morality. Being the innermost and most radical act of the soul of man, the affective act of the will, an offering of oneself to God, it represents the highest expression of morality and the acme of perfection.<sup>77</sup>

It is natural to expect charity to play an important role in a theology such as St. Augustine's, which is oriented in a practical manner toward God. But that the same charity should play an equally important role in philosophy can be explained only by St. Augustine's notion of philosophy. As already stated a religious or ethical factor enters into the domain of Augustinian philosophy. On this account the roots of charity penetrate into the soil of philosophy. A philosopher is one who lives a well-ordered life in order to attain the highest good. Inversely, "to seek the highest good is to live well, so that to live well is nothing else than to love God with the whole heart, the whole soul, and the whole mind."<sup>78</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *Ep.* 155, 4, 13 (PL 33, 672; CSEL 44, 443): "Tanto nobis melius est, quanto magis in illum imus, quo nihil melius est. Imus autem non ambulando sed amando."

<sup>74</sup> *Loc. cit.*, "Nec faciunt bonos vel malos mores, nisi boni vel mali amores."

<sup>75</sup> *De civ. Dei*, XV, 22 (PL 41, 467; ed. Dombart-Kalb, II, 107): "definitio brevis et vera virtutis: ordo est amoris."

<sup>76</sup> *Ep.* 155, 4, 13 (PL 33, 671; CSEL 44, 443): "Quamquam in hac vita virtus non est, nisi diligere quod diligendum est."

<sup>77</sup> Cf. J. Mausbach, "Wesen und Stufung des Lebens nach dem hl. Augustinus." *Aurelius Augustinus. Die Festschrift der Görres-gesellschaft zum 1500 Todestage des heiligen Augustinus* (Köln: 1930), p. 188.

<sup>78</sup> *De mor. Eccl. Cath.*, 1, 25, 46 (PL 32, 1330): ". . . quoniam summum

Thus the "love of wisdom" (which is a translation of the Greek word *philosophia*) is the love of God, and every true lover of philosophy is a lover of God.<sup>79</sup> This is why charity "occupies a central position in Augustine's ethics which are saturated with it, and which can be entirely reduced to it."<sup>80</sup>

#### INTELLECTUALIST OR VOLUNTARIST

This attitude of St. Augustine has given rise to the speculation and controversy whether he is to be classified as an intellectualist or a voluntarist. It is the contention of some that Augustine was a voluntarist, chiefly on account of the strong ethical tendencies of both his theology and philosophy, and on account of the primary role assigned to charity in his body of doctrine and code of morality. Virtue, which holds a primary place in his theology and philosophy, has its seat in the will. A fortiori this is the case with charity which constitutes the very wellspring of all volitional acts. Hence to the will is accorded primacy over reason.<sup>81</sup> Others do not agree with this opinion, but maintain that reason and the operations of the intellect take priority over the acts of the will, and predominate in his writings to such an extent that he may be termed an intellectualist.<sup>82</sup> Still others hold that neither designation can rightly and exclusively be applied to Augustine on the grounds that acts of reason and those of the will are not separated, but constitute a whole in his writings, a functional unity, so that the existence of the one calls for the other as its necessary counterpart. This interfunctioning of the mental faculties, especially in the sphere of religion, brings about a balanced proportion of both elements.<sup>83</sup>

bonum appetere, est bene vivere, ut nihil sit aliud bene vivere, quam toto corde, tota anima, tota mente Deum diligere."

<sup>79</sup> Cf. L. Grandgeorge, *S. Augustin et le neo-platonisme* (Paris: 1896), p. 25.

<sup>80</sup> B. Switalski, *Plotinus and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), pp. 54-55.

<sup>81</sup> E.g., R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (3 ed.; Erlangen-Leipzig: 1923), II, 433 f.; G. M. Manser, "Augustins Philosophie in ihrem Verhältnis und ihrer Abhängigkeit von Plotin, den Fürsten des Neuplatonismus," *Divus Thomas*, X (1932), 6 f.

<sup>82</sup> E.g., A. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (4th ed.; Tübingen: 1910), III, 120, footnote 1.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. e.g., K. Girgensohn-W. Gruhn, *Der seelische Aufbau des religiösen*



It is true that St. Augustine has, through his doctrine on charity, overcome the intellectualism of ancient philosophers who have contributed not a little to Christian thought.<sup>84</sup> It is likewise indisputable that he has by far outdistanced the Fathers in developing the concept of charity and determining its place in the body of Christian doctrines. Moreover, a closer study of his writings will bring to light that both the intellect and the will have respective provinces, and interfunction mutually in the realm of reason as well as in that of faith. Hence, if the philosophy and theology of St. Augustine are to be designated as voluntaristic, it is so because the will plays an important role in them.

It is, however, a voluntarism that is peculiar to the writings of St. Augustine, and one that fits into a type of philosophy and theology where much stress is laid on the practical side of life. In the course of his theological and philosophical speculations St. Augustine never loses sight of the ultimate end of man. Hence his appeal to that faculty of man within whose power it is to strive after that end. Scholastic philosophers teach that the object of the will is the good. Likewise the object of Augustinian philosophy is the good, inasmuch as it is a participation of the supreme Good which constitutes the happiness of man. It is the will which draws man from the material world surrounding and enticing him, and directs him towards his proper end. It is the will, too, which in matters of faith accepts what is hardly understandable even before a better understanding of the doctrine can be obtained.

The role of the will in the philosophy and theology of St. Augustine will be better understood if we bear in mind the ethical character of his philosophy, and the dynamic or practical nature of his theology. His doctrine is almost always associated with, and directed toward, such human action and behavior as are necessary to reach God, and in God happiness. We must likewise remem-

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*Erlebens. Eine religionspsychologische Untersuchung auf experimenteller Grundlage* (Gütersloh: 1930), p. 640; J. Mausbach, *Die Ethik des heiligen Augustinus* (2 Aug.; Freiburg in Br.: 1929), I, 75; O. Dittrich, *Geschichte der Ethik* (Leipzig: 1926), II, 228.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. A. Dempf, "Die Ethik des Mittelalters" (in *Handbuch der Philosophie*, hrsg. von Baemler u. Schröter, Abt. III: Mensch u. Charakter; München u. Berlin: 1931), p. 45; B. Świtalski, *Plotinus and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), p. 57.

ber that there are, according to St. Augustine, ethical prerequisites for the attainment of truth. In all such cases the influence and activity of the will are of paramount importance. Finally, human nature itself strives by a natural tendency towards its own perfecting in which lies its proximate and ultimate happiness. This natural tendency is rooted in the will.

This does not mean that the will precludes the other functions of the soul, especially the activity of the intellect; nor does it mean that will precedes intellect in action, or is superior to it in dignity or importance. If primacy is ascribed to the Augustinian will, it signifies that this faculty of the soul is the power which arouses and moves the other faculties to action whereby the attainment of man's ultimate goal is made possible. It is, therefore, a primacy of action and not of being.<sup>85</sup>

St. Augustine does not deny that intellectual knowledge antecedes faith; for, in order that one may believe, he must first perceive what is to be believed. Then, in turn, one must believe in order to understand more fully. "Understand," he says, "that you may believe my word. Believe that you may understand the word of God."<sup>86</sup> This principle which he enunciates in regard to faith is that which he applies to the relationship of the thing known and desired. The will does not move toward an object or act upon it, unless the object already exists in the mind. In other words an object cannot be loved by the will unless it is known by the intellect. Knowledge of a thing precedes by nature the desiring and loving of that thing. The knowledge of the thing to be desired or loved need not be perfect. All that is required is an apprehension of it, or some tenuous degree of knowledge. The will does the rest. Its impulse of love urges man to a greater study and better knowledge of the object apprehended but slightly known.<sup>87</sup> This principle of the

<sup>85</sup> Cf. J. Pastuszka, "Stosunek Św. Augustyna do Filozofii" in S. Bross, *Święty Augustyn* (Praca Zbiorowa: Poznań: 1930), p. 203.

<sup>86</sup> *Sermo* 43, 7, 9 (PL 38, 258): "Intellige, ut credas, verbum meum: crede, ut intelligas, verbum Dei." *Enar. in Ps.*, 118, *Sermo* 18, 3 (PL 37, 1552): "Quamvis enim nisi aliquid intelligat, nemo possit credere in Deum; tamen ipse fide qua credit, sanatur ut intelligat ampliora." Cf. A. Tymczak, *Nauka Św. Augustyna o Wierze* (Przemyśl: 1933), p. 37.

<sup>87</sup> *In Io. Ev.*, tr. 96, 4 (PL 35, 1876): "Non enim diligitur, quod penitus ignoratur. Sed cum diligitur, quod ex quantulumcumque parte cognoscitur, ipsa efficitur dilectione, ut melius et plenius cognoscatur."

psychic constitution of man that understanding precedes the action of the will is recognized by St. Augustine in the domain of psychology and in the sphere of religion.

From what has been said concerning the role of philosophy in St. Augustine's theological thought, it is evident that his concept of philosophy is broader than that of the Scholastics and of present-day philosophers.<sup>88</sup> Augustine does not stand on the ground of natural reason alone in order to attain truth, but makes use of revelation. His purpose is to gain wisdom, which cannot be attained by unaided reason; in fact, Augustine understands wisdom as a gift of God. Moreover, his philosophy is not limited to the object of the intellect alone, but encompasses the operations of the will. Finally, the intellect and the will strive toward happiness as to their goal, which is also the scope of Augustine's theology. Thus the range of his philosophy coincides with the field of what is called speculative theology.<sup>89</sup>

As a matter of fact there exists in Augustine's works a union between theology, philosophy, and even mysticism. He does not expressly indicate what he conceives as belonging to the domain of theology and to that of philosophy. In consequence, it has been questioned at times whether in the mind of St. Augustine theology and philosophy had their own provinces. As the Bishop was a strenuous defender of the existence of two orders, the natural and the supernatural, it would be difficult to understand how he could not have perceived the distinction between the two spheres of knowledge, the natural and the revealed.<sup>90</sup> In fact in his monumental treatise on the most holy Trinity he draws a line of demarcation between what is pervious to reason and what is obtainable through revelation.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1943), pp. 38-43; id., "L'idée de philosophie chez saint Augustin et chez saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Acta Hebdomadae Augustiniana-Thomisticae* (Taurin-Romae: 1931), pp. 75-87.

<sup>89</sup> M. Grabmann, "Augustins Lehre von Glauben und Wissen und ihr Einfluss auf das mittelalterliche Denken" *Aurelius Augustinus*, etc., p. 91.

<sup>90</sup> F. Cayré, *Initiation à la philosophie de Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1947), pp. 2-3.

<sup>91</sup> M. Schmaus, *Die psychologische Trinitätslehre des hl. Augustinus* (Münster: 1927), p. 175: "So hat der Kirchenvater die Demarkationslinie zwischen Glauben und Wissenschaft genau gezogen und beiden ihre Rechte gewährt."

Notwithstanding the ethical character of philosophy, Augustine is fully aware that the object of any philosophy is truth, and that *all* truth. A part of philosophy cannot be accepted and another part rejected; if one or some truths are accepted, all the others must be accepted likewise. Individual truths are bound together, corroborate one another, shed light upon one another, and form a whole. If such is the case with all truth, the more is this verified in philosophical truth, which, on account of its abstract nature, contains a wider comprehension and more extensive application. For philosophy deals with the fundamental problems of being. The philosophical mind of St. Augustine was able to penetrate these problems and to solve them.

However, St. Augustine does not rest in the attainment of pure theoretical truth. For him truth means more than an apprehension, an understanding, an intellectual possession. Every truth contains in itself a definite bearing upon the conduct of life. It is the property of truth to possess a certain spiritual dynamism, a certain power which impels man to action. Since philosophy is a sum total and co-ordination of all truths, he who is in possession of her must adjust his life so that it is in complete harmony with these truths. There should not be any conflict between the truths of philosophy and the deeds of man. If philosophy is defined as the love of wisdom according to the etymology of the word, then it must embrace together with its truths ethical principles for the regulation of life in order that man may attain happiness.<sup>92</sup>

Accordingly, St. Augustine lays down practically the same intellectual and volitional dispositions for the acceptance of philosophy as He would for the acceptance of religious or theological truth. Philosophy can gain entrance into the soul, only if the latter is ready and willing to accept it.<sup>93</sup> Moreover, even after accepting philosophical truth, in order that the forces inherent in it may stimulate and generate action, they must find in the soul a disposition that is suitable for action. For St. Augustine the prerequisites of truth are not only conditions of the intellect, but also qualifications of the will.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Pastuszka, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

<sup>93</sup> *Contra Acad.*, II, 3, 8 (PL 32, 923): "Nam ipsum verum non videbis, nisi in philosophiam totum intraveris."

<sup>94</sup> M. Grabmann, "Augustins Lehre von Glauben und Wissen ihr Einfluss auf das mittelalterliche Denken," in *Aurelius Augustinus* (Köln: 1930), p. 92:



What prerequisites does St. Augustine postulate in the soul if she is to accept philosophy and allow it to exert its power upon one's life? He maintains that the soul must possess a certain nobility and purity of heart. The soul must be predisposed by moral principles and qualities so as to harmonize with the ideas or truths which she accepts and holds. She must be molded, as it were, by psychic forms, and adapted to the matter which she is to receive. Just as in the domain of the intellect, a relationship must exist between the object and the subject in order that an assimilation may take place and thus knowledge be begotten, so too in philosophy there must be a relation of compatibility between the truth to be acquired and the subject acquiring it.

In order to know truth, one must seek it with a heart free from selfish desires, inane glory, and pride. More than that one must search for it with a divinely inspired love for truth.<sup>95</sup> Whoever is religious by nature, and earnestly seeks truth with humility, piety, and diligence will surely find it.<sup>96</sup> Minds that are defiled with earthly desires cannot raise themselves upward in quest of divine things. What Augustine says of Socrates can be reaffirmed of himself and is an apt illustration of the disposition necessary for the pursuit of truth:

For (Socrates) saw that the causes of things were sought for by them (philosophers)—which causes he believed to be ultimately reducible to nothing else than the will of the one true and supreme God—and on this account he thought they could only be comprehended by a purified mind; and therefore that all diligence ought to be given to the purification of the life of good morals, in order that the mind, delivered from the depressing weight of the lusts, might raise itself upward by its native vigor to eternal things, and might, with purified understanding, contemplate that nature which is incorporeal and unchangeable light, where live the causes of all created natures.<sup>97</sup>

"Vor allem hat er den Gesichtspunkt der ethischen Reinheit für die Erkenntnis der göttlichen Dinge hervorgehoben. Für ihn ist die Erkenntnis der Wahrheit nicht bloss Aufgabe des Intellekts, sondern auch des Willens, der sitlichen Persönlichkeit."

<sup>95</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 14, 24 (PL 32, 1049): "non studio inanis gloriae, sed divino amore veritatis accensi."

<sup>96</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 14, 24 (PL 32, 1049): "Fieri autem non potest quadam divina providentia, ut religiosus animis seipsos et Deum suum, id est veritatem, pie, caste ac diligenter quaerentibus, inveniendi facultas desit."

<sup>97</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 3 (PL 41, 226-27; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 323); Eng. tr. *op. cit.*, II, 103.

St. Augustine seeks in an aspirant to genuine philosophy a pure intention, a religious attitude, and an elevation of the mind to spiritual things. In addition to this disposition of mind and heart he postulates diligence, for by it the faculties of man are gratuitously put to the service of truth. Love, too, is required in seekers of truth, since love leads man to self-sacrifice without which he cannot make himself pure and free himself from selfishness. Who strives after true philosophy must emancipate himself from selfish motives and sensual pleasures. In doing these things he makes room in his heart for God, who is indispensable to philosophy.<sup>98</sup> Having formed such a disposition and acquired truth a philosopher must live in accordance with the postulates of truth by making his actions consonant with the requirements of philosophy.

The greatest obstacle in the way of attaining truth is pride. St. Augustine, who made it his duty to investigate the course of philosophical thought in pagan antiquity, describes the errors which pagan philosophers have fallen into as permitted by Providence on account of their pride. Truth, just as grace in the supernatural order, is a gift of God which is received by those who make approaches to truth with a suitable disposition. The one virtue which St. Augustine emphasizes repeatedly, in the supernatural order as well as the natural, as a basic ingredient of this disposition is humility. She is the soul of everything that is great and noble, and therefore also of philosophy.<sup>99</sup> Led by the spirit of humility, a philosopher will recognize the limitations of his intellect, and will turn to authority or faith when reason proves to be insufficient.<sup>100</sup>

St. Augustine is adamant in holding that the purification of the soul is not the effect of truth, but rather the cause of it.<sup>101</sup> As has already been pointed out, truth only then catches root in the

<sup>98</sup> *De Mus.*, VI, 14 (PL 32, 1187); *Enar. in Ps.* 62, 17 (PL 36, 758).

<sup>99</sup> *Ep.* 118, 3, 22 (PL 33, 442): "Ea est autem prima humilitas; secunda humilitas; tertia humilitas; et quoties interrogares hoc dicerem; nisi humilitas omnia quaecunque bene facimus et praecesserit et comitetur et consecuta fuerit, et proposita quam intueamur, et opposita cui adhaereamus, et imposita qua reprimamur, jam nobis de aliquo bono facto gaudentibus totum extorquet de manu superbia."

<sup>100</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 7, 12 (PL 32, 1042). Humility, together with charity, is an outstanding virtue of his teaching and personal life. Cf. F. Van der Meer, *Augustinus der Seelsorger* (Köln, 1951), p. 19: "Wir brauchen nicht lange nach der Tugend zu suchen, die er heroisch geübt hat: er war die Demut."

<sup>101</sup> *Contra Faustum*, XXII, 52, (PL 42, 433).

intellect when it has been planted in the proper soil—in a soul which is prepared and made ready to receive it by a proper disposition. In other words, purification of the soul is a prerequisite of its intellectual enrichment. The will prepares the way for the reception of truth; the action of the will rather precedes than follows the theoretical process of knowledge. This relationship of the intellect to the will, of truth to virtue is the psychology which the youthful Augustine gained from practical, and often bitter experience. In the years when he was given over to sensual pleasures, he was unable to form a concept of a spiritual being and his conduct proved to be a barrier to the formation or blossoming of spiritual ideals. His ideas corresponded to his mode of life.<sup>102</sup> As long as he did not change his way of living he was unable to change his views. Such is the power of illicit love, points out St. Augustine, that, if we give ourselves over to it for a long time, it remains in our mind long after we have changed our disposition and returned to the ways of chastity.<sup>103</sup>

Every truth bears within itself characteristics of the perfections of God. There is an essential relation between God and truth. God is the indispensable standard and criterion of truth; without him knowledge would be unattainable. The more profound and the more abstract truths are, the closer are they to God. Of such nature are the truths which we may designate as philosophico-religious truths.

St. Augustine ascribes to human knowledge the functions of contemplation and action. These functions correspond to the contemplative and active dispositions of man. By active knowledge man reaches down to that which is below it, namely, towards making use of the sensible; by contemplative knowledge he turns upward toward something that is above it, namely, towards possession of the intelligible.<sup>104</sup> Active life, a life of toil and virtue, is only a means and a preparation to the contemplative life, and hence it is subordinate to it.<sup>105</sup>

Human thought is by its very nature contemplative since it does

<sup>102</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 1 (PL 32, 733; ed. M. Skutella, 124).

<sup>103</sup> *De Trinit.*, X, 5 (PL 42, 977).

<sup>104</sup> *De Trinit.*, XII, 3, 3 (PL 42, 1388); *ibid.*, XII, 12, 17 (PL 42, 1398).

<sup>105</sup> *De cons. Evang.*, 1, 5, 8 (PL 34, 1045-46); *Contra Faust.*, XXII, 52 (PL 42, 432-33); cf. F. Cayré, *La contemplation Augustinienne. Principes de la spiritualité de S. Augustin* (Paris: 1927), pp. 37-38, 60-66.

not limit itself to a knowledge of particular phenomena and facts of life, but grasps these in the light of their deeper associations which bear upon their origin and existence. In order to know the origin of a being and the cause of its existence, the mind proceeds through its intuitive reasoning to the First Cause of that being and its existence. While seeking to know one truth, it hastens to discover the source of all truth. In the process of this knowledge the ideas of things impinge themselves on the mind, and from these the mind proceeds to a knowledge of the first ideas, the prototypes of all created beings.

St. Augustine distinguishes three kinds of degrees of knowledge,<sup>106</sup> expressed by three terms, viz., *sensus*, *spiritus*, and *mens*.<sup>107</sup> Sense-knowledge of corporeal impressions is obtained by the senses.<sup>108</sup> Augustine also distinguishes between exterior sense-perceptions and an interior sense (*sensus interior*).<sup>109</sup> Under the name *spiritus* the Bishop understands that spiritual function of the soul whereby it forms, associates, or dissociates the likeness of corporeal things. It is the creative and reproductive power of the imagination.<sup>110</sup> Here belongs what Augustine calls *phantasia*, a reproduced image of something once seen, and *phantasma*, an image formed of something not seen before.<sup>111</sup>

The highest degree of knowledge is designated by the word *mens*, which is the noblest part of the soul. It contains two kinds or degrees of knowledge, viz., that which is designated *ratio* and that which is termed *intellectus*. Reason (*ratio*), a discursive faculty, produces *scientia* which is a certain knowledge but relative to sensible objects.<sup>112</sup> By the intellect or intelligence (*intellectus*, *intelligentia*) we attain to the knowledge of the eternal and im-

<sup>106</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 11, 22 (PL 34, 462; CSEL 28, I, 392-93).

<sup>107</sup> Cf. J. Pastuszka, *Niematerjalność Duszy Ludzkiej u św. Augustyna* (Lublin: 1930), pp. 36 ff., 57 ff.; B. Jolivet, "La doctrine Augustinienne de l'illumination," *Revue de Philosophie*, XXX (1930), 497-502; F. Cayré, "Contemplation et raison d'après St. Augustin," *Revue de Philosophie*, XXX (1930), 331-81; E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1943), p. 56.

<sup>108</sup> *De quant. anim.*, 23 ff. (PL 32, 1058 ff.).

<sup>109</sup> *De lib. arb.*, II, 3, 9 (PL 32, 1244).

<sup>110</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 23, 49 (PL 34, 473; CSEL 28, I, 414).

<sup>111</sup> *De musica*, VI, 11, 32 (PL 32, 1180).

<sup>112</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 2, 3 (PL 40, 140).



mutable; this results in wisdom, a knowledge of the purely intelligible.<sup>113</sup> The term *spiritus*, in conformity with the scriptural usage, is at times used synonymously with *mens*.<sup>114</sup>

In this classification of knowledge the distinction between that knowledge which is termed *scientia* and that which is designated *sapientia* plays a major role in his philosophy, theology, and religion. This twofold knowledge is pivotal in his 'epistemology,' although Augustine was not intent upon elaborating a theory of knowledge for its own sake; it is a key to understanding the prominence of God in his philosophy; it emphasizes "the fact that knowledge of truth is to be sought, not for purely academic purposes, but as bringing true happiness, true beatitude."<sup>115</sup>

Wisdom (*sapientia*) is directed toward the eternal and immutable ideas, which are the exemplars of all that exists. While the mind of Plato created a world of ideas, existing in itself and apart from the world of reality, Augustine realized that such ideas could not exist apart from God. They have their foundation and reality in the eternity and immutability of the essence of God. Wisdom consists in the contemplation of eternal truths in an intuition of the purely intelligible, according to the highest functions of the intellect. This is the knowledge which truly constitutes the object of philosophy, whose very name signifies "love of wisdom."<sup>116</sup>

In a passage in *De Trinitate*<sup>117</sup> written at a mature period of his life, he states: "And to be sure, when they have steadfastly believed the Holy Scriptures as most true witnesses, let them strive, by praying and seeking and living well, that they may understand . . . by the mind which is held fast by faith."<sup>118</sup> Here St. Augustine summarizes the essentials for philosophical contemplation. The three requirements, therefore, for wisdom are faith, study, moral-

<sup>113</sup> *De Trinit.*, XII, 15, 25 (PL 42, 1012).

<sup>114</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 24, 51 (PL 34, 474; CSEL 28, I, 416); *De anim. et ejus orig.*, IV, 22, 36 (PL 44, 544).

<sup>115</sup> F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster, Md.: 1950), II, 51.

<sup>116</sup> *De civ. Dei*, VIII, 1 (PL 41, 224; ed. Dombart-Kalb, I, 320).

<sup>117</sup> *De Trinit.*, 15, 27, 49 (PL 42, 1096): "Et certe cum inconcusse crediderint Scripturis Sanctis tamquam veracissimis testibus, agant orando et quaerendo et bene vivendo ut intelligant, id est, ut quantum videri potest, videatur mente quod tenetur fide."

<sup>118</sup> Tr. *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, ed. W. J. Oates (New York: 1948), II, 875.

ity,<sup>119</sup> which he again repeats in another work, *Contra Faustum: studium, fides, boni mores*.<sup>120</sup> By "mind" (*mens*) he means the superior part of the rational soul by which it adheres to the *intelligibilia* and to God.<sup>121</sup>

Between knowledge which arises from sensation and knowledge which springs from contemplation, there lies that knowledge which Augustine terms *scientia*. Sensation-knowledge (inasmuch as it can be knowledge) is common to man and brute; contemplation-knowledge or wisdom is proper to the mind alone, without the medium of the senses. The *scientia*-knowledge belongs to man and not to brutes, and is directed toward mutable phenomena with or without correlating them to their immutable causes. Since it is knowledge which the intellect extracts from things which lie within the sphere of the sensible, it encompasses the mutable, temporal, and contingent things. It serves man in this earthly life.

Augustine purports to find corroboration for this distinction between knowledge and wisdom in popular usage, when he remarks: "And among men it is probably accustomed to be expressed in this manner, that wisdom belongs to the understanding of eternal things, whereas knowledge to those objects which we experience by the sense."<sup>122</sup> This is the most conspicuous of the several meanings of the term "knowledge" (*scientia*) occurring in the writings of St. Augustine.<sup>123</sup> In a certain sense it may be said that wisdom is *the* knowledge in so far as its object is universal, embracing all being and not limiting itself to sensible objects. In this sense the Bishop asserts that wisdom is the knowledge (*scientia*) of human and divine things.<sup>124</sup> It is apparent that in the use of this terminology Augustine is re-echoing the definitions of the Latin philosophers<sup>125</sup> who had a share in his philosophical formation.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. H. I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Paris: 1949), p. 364.

<sup>120</sup> *Contra Faustum*, XXII, 53 (PL 42, 433).

<sup>121</sup> E. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Augustin* (2me éd.; Paris: 1943), p. 56.

<sup>122</sup> *De div. quaest. ad Simpl.*, II, 3 (PL 40, 140).

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Marrou, *op. cit.*, pp. 561-64.

<sup>124</sup> *Contra Acad.*, I, 6, 16 (PL 32, 914): "Non enim nunc primum auditis sapientiam esse rerum humanarum divinarumque scientiam." *De Trinit.*, XIV, 1, 2 (PL 42, 1037).

<sup>125</sup> *Contra Acad.*, I, 6, 16 (PL 32, 914) in which the definition of Seneca, *Ep.*

In many ways, the object of philosophy as it is presented by St. Augustine does not appear to be different from that conceived by the greatest Greek sages. The Greek philosophers devoid of revelation attacked the problems of truth from the lowest rung, ascending from particular phenomena in nature to universal truths, from particular causes to a universal one. Augustine, too, admits as true what man learns from bodily senses,<sup>126</sup> and ascends from such knowledge to God, even though material beings, essentially mutable, are faint manifestations of God. A closer and more effective ascent to God is from the soul which through its rational nature is an image of God. Still better; possessing a knowledge of the Prime Cause and its nature from revelation, Augustine shows his predilection for viewing the universe from above in the light of eternity and immutability. Thus the Saint had an overwhelming advantage over the Greek thinkers, in so far as revelation supplied him with materials that were wanting to them.

In Plato, the object of philosophy rests in the world of ideas, in knowing being as such. The quest of truth has its source in the deepest and most potent urge in man which is the *Eros*. This impulse is aroused to action by contact with a material and sensible object. It cannot however be satisfied with phenomena, but rises above the material sphere to enter the world of ideas. It is here that the soul of man satiates its thirst for knowledge in the vision of eternal and immutable truths, and by the intuition of the Highest Good. The "Good" or "Form of Good" is "the supreme object of the philosopher's study." It "is to the objects of knowledge and to knowing itself what the sun is to visible objects and to sight."<sup>127</sup> Inasmuch as this "Form of Good" is the transcendent source of all reality and intelligibility, it can be identified with the Christian concept of God.<sup>128</sup>

In his own way, Aristotle likewise accepts the existence of a supersensible world. But he replaces Plato's transcendental being

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89, 7 is quoted: "Sapientiam esse rerum divinarum humanarumque scientiam dicebant." Cf. also Cicero, *Tuscul. disput.*, V, 37: "divinarum humanarumque rerum, tum initiorum causarumque cujusque rerum." See, H. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin: 1789), p. 273.

<sup>126</sup> *De Trinit.*, XV, 12, 21 (PL 42, 1075).

<sup>127</sup> A. E. Taylor, *Plato the Man and His Work* (London: 1948), pp. 285-86.

<sup>128</sup> A. E. Taylor, *ibid.*, p. 289.

by his own notion of reality.<sup>129</sup> Ideas are not self-existing and distinct from real beings as we see them existing, but they are ontological laws and dynamic forms of concrete, existing beings. The concepts which we form of objects are not purely subjective, but have a real foundation in existing things. The immaterial world is something real and first in the order of beings. The world of matter and of the senses is something posterior and owes its origin to the activity of the spirit. Every material being is an image of the super-sensible world, and every phenomenon is indicative of some metaphysical reality which has its foundation in the realm of the super-sensible.<sup>130</sup>

This division of the world of matter and spirit so fundamental to the philosophies of the greatest Greek minds appeared to be so real to St. Augustine that he did not hesitate to introduce it into Christian philosophy. What is distinctive of St. Augustine is his over-spiritual conception of the functions of philosophy, and this is particularly evident from the manner in which he draws a line of demarcation between what he calls wisdom (*sapientia*) and knowledge (*scientia*). He makes wisdom appear to be something foreign to this world, and seemingly in opposition to knowledge, which deals with material objects. However, the chasm between both of these is only apparent.

Augustine does not construct a spiritual world wholly apart from that of experimental realities. He does not form the structure of wisdom without the foundation of knowledge. The former presupposes the latter. For wisdom is both contemplative and active, and it thus brings order and harmony into earthly realities. Moreover, it guides and directs them. But in order to do this it must know them. Knowledge, therefore, which is a means to an end, must be recognized as something good, and even necessary.<sup>131</sup> In consequence, wisdom cannot be separated from knowledge, since both are functions of the same intellect, which like the whole life of man is ruled by the law of unity and dependence.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>129</sup> W. Jaeger, *Aristotle* (2nd ed.; Oxford: 1948), p. 20.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (5th ed.; London: 1949), pp. 154 ff.

<sup>131</sup> *De Trinit.*, XII, 14, 22 (PL 42, 1010).

<sup>132</sup> *De Trinit.*, XII, 4, 4 (PL 42, 1000): "Cum igitur disserimus de natura mentis humanae, de una quadam re disserimus, . . . non separantes actionem rationalem in temporalibus a contemplatione aeternorum, . . ."



One is in the possession of wisdom then when he has reached the sphere of the eternal ideas, when the supersensible reality is grasped by the intellect in the manner that the hands take hold of something palpable. For the soul, however, to penetrate into the world of ideas, into the sanctuary of the supersensible, is by no means easy, for it requires a previous liberation from entanglements in matter. In order to extricate oneself from the material and sensible world, one must master it through knowledge (*scientia*), and having recognized its deficiencies and limitations, raise oneself to the world of the spirit.<sup>133</sup>

It seems that these basic elements of Augustinian philosophy are commonly accepted by other philosophers. For the foundations of every more profound system of philosophy rest upon the supposition of the existence of a twofold reality (matter and spirit), and of the dependence of matter upon spirit. In fact, to define philosophy, in the fashion of the Scholastics, as a science of realities in the light of their deeper causes, is to bear witness to an Augustinian tradition, even if the delimitations of philosophy are not the same.

The starting point for knowledge is the material world which surrounds man, but the ulterior object of man's knowledge is the supersensible world. The intellect of man is not content with the knowledge of particulars which it acquires by means of sense perceptions, but forges ahead in order to know these realities in their deeper causes and associations. In doing this, it follows the course upon which St. Augustine has embarked in his philosophical investigations. In other words, a more thorough investigation into sense knowledge, and initiation into the world of the perceptible, will inevitably lead human thought to know the essence of things and their metaphysical laws, both of which will by force of necessity obtrude themselves upon the human intellect as eternal and immutable. These essences of things and their laws constitute that supersensible world which is hidden beneath the surface of the phenomenal world. They are an image of the eternal and immutable ideas of God, and form (as it were) the soul of the material world. It is, therefore, these essences of things and their metaphysical laws that constitute the proper object of philosophy. Where-

<sup>133</sup> Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-51.

fore, for St. Augustine, philosophy is not synonymous with the *scientia*-knowledge. The knowledge which is directly extracted from earthly things is only a stage in knowing that which is unending and changeless.

The eternal and immutable laws are not limited to one or some types of beings, but govern the universality of being. The deeper we penetrate through our knowledge, the closer do we come to an ideal unity. Even when the world is viewed externally through sense knowledge as a complexity of all things, it presents itself as a whole, as an integral and harmonious unit. This characteristic of unity should be reflected in a most profound study of being, which is philosophy as wisdom. For wisdom signifies the fullness of knowledge; but where there is a fullness of knowledge, there can be no want of it or ignorance. Our knowledge then must take in the whole of reality. Corresponding to this universality of the object is the subjective universality evidenced in the tendency of man to know the whole and all truth and not only a part of it, and in the conviction that our judgments are universal. Philosophy satiates these appetites of unity and universality and must bring us closer to knowing the absolute unity, which is God.

The philosophy of St. Augustine, as was seen, was oriented toward the supersensible, in the direction of the world of ideas; but it did not rest even there. It reached out to the very source of all ideas, viz., to God Himself. The nature of his philosophy—its point of departure and functions—led Augustine to make God the center of his philosophy. It lies within the sphere of philosophy to know more profoundly the causes of all reality, of which the ultimate cause is the Creator, the highest Good and the prime Mover.<sup>134</sup> Thus every act of philosophical thought contains a theistic orientation: proceeding to know the causes of being, it cannot omit the First Cause. Philosophy purports to know all truth; it does so by embracing all reality and by solving all problems

<sup>134</sup> *De ord.*, II, 5, 16 (PL 32, 1002): "Nullumque aliud habet negotium, quae vera, et, ut ita dicam, germana philosophia est, quam ut doceat, quod sit omnium rerum principium sine principio, quantusque in eo maneat intellectus, quidve inde in nostram salutem sine ulla degeneratione manaverit: quem unum Deum omnipotentem eumque tripotentem, Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, docent veneranda mysteria, quae fide sincera et inconcussa populos liberant."

emanating out of the universe and life. In seeking and attaining truth, the source and foundation of all truth cannot be passed over, otherwise our knowledge would not merit the name of philosophy since it would not exhaust all truth.<sup>135</sup> Philosophical knowledge cannot rest satisfied with reaching the borders of the sphere of being, but must penetrate to the very threshold of the Supreme Being, the first Cause of all beings.

In this matter, later philosophers and theologians who were wont to distinguish more precisely between the domain of reason and faith, show no hesitation in going the full length with these reasonings of St. Augustine. St. Thomas states that the purpose of almost the whole of philosophy is to know God.<sup>136</sup> John Scotus Erigena simply asserts that true philosophy is true religion and true religion is true philosophy.<sup>137</sup>

When the intellect reaches the highest Truth, it draws its counterpart, the will, with its counteraction of love. Thus it can be said that the immediate effect of philosophy, in the Augustinian system, is the love of God. In order to understand better this twofold activity of the soul, it must be remembered that philosophy took its beginning, not so much from interest in theoretical knowledge, as from a deep-rooted and ineluctable desire for happiness. The activity of the intellect is not a goal in itself, but is put into the service of the potent impulse to happiness. It is the human will which strives for happiness as its satiating object, and when it attains this object in part or in full, it elicits acts of love on account of the possession of its beatifying object.

If philosophy is oriented toward the first Cause and the highest Truth, then a fortiori is theology directed toward the *Summum Bonum*. This happiness-bringing object in this life and the perfectly beatifying-object in eternity are manifested to us not only by the light of reason but also of revelation. St. Augustine is not

<sup>135</sup> *De div. quaest.*, 83, q. 54 (PL 40, 38).

<sup>136</sup> S. Thomas, *Contra Gentes*, I, 4: "fere totius philosophiae consideratio ad Dei cognitionem ordinatur."

<sup>137</sup> John Scotus Erigena, *De div. praedestinatione*, I, 1 (PL 122, 358): "Quid est aliud de philosophia tractare, nisi verae religionis, qua summa et principalis omnium rerum causa, Deus et humiliter colitur, et rationabiliter investigatur, regulas exponere? Conficitur inde, veram esse philosophiam veram religionem conversimque veram religionem esse veram philosophiam."

careful to discern what we know of God by reason and what we know by revelation but considers both knowledges *per modum unius*. In any case God constitutes the central object of his theology. Philosophy put to the service of revelation or faith begets that science or knowledge which is theology.<sup>138</sup> "By this knowledge," says Augustine, "salvation-bringing faith, which leads to true happiness, is born, nourished, defended, and strengthened."<sup>139</sup> This sentence of St. Augustine has not only furnished St. Thomas with an authoritative argument for the scientific character of theology in his introductory disquisition on the nature of sacred doctrine in the *Summa Theologica*,<sup>140</sup> but has supplied the Scholastics with one of their main props buttressing their contention for the ancillary character of philosophy, and describing the relationship between theology and faith.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. C. Boyer, "Philosophie et Théologie chez Saint Augustin," *Rev. de Philosophie*, XXX (1930), 518.

<sup>139</sup> *De Trinit.*, XIV, 1, 3 (PL 42, 1037): "Hac scientia fides saluberrima, quae ad veram beatitudinem ducit, gignitur, nutritur, defenditur, roboratur." Cf. Pius XI, "Studiorum Ducem," *AAS*, 15 (1923), 309-10; 315.

<sup>140</sup> *Summa Theol.*, Ia, q. 1, a. 2. St. Thomas has substituted for the *scientia* of St. Augustine the *scientia* of Aristotle (*demonstratio, apódeixis*) which signifies knowledge drawn from first principles by way of demonstration. Cf. M. D. Chenu, "La théologie comme science au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age*, II (1927), 31-71; St. Thomas, *In Boethium de Trinitate*, q. 2, a. 2 and 3. M. Grabmann, *Die theologische Erkenntnis- und Einleitungslehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin auf Grund seiner Schrift in Boethium de Trinitate* (Freiburg in der Schweiz: 1948), pp. 101 ff.; *id.*, "Der Wissenschaftsbegriff des hl. Thomas von Aquin und das Verhältnis von Glaube und Theologie zur Philosophie und weltlichen Wissenschaft," *Jahresbericht der Görresgesellschaft*, 1932-33 (Köln: 1934), pp. 7\*-44\*; *id.*, "Il concetto di scienza secondo S. Tommaso d'Aquino e le relazioni della fede e della teologia con la filosofia e le scienze profane," *Revista di filosofia neoscolastica* XXVI (1934), 127-55; *id.*, "De theologia ut scientia argumentativa secundum S. Albertum Magnum et S. Thomam Aquinatem," *Angelicum*, XIV (1937), 39-60.



## CHAPTER XII: CONCLUSION

### PRESENCE OF GOD AND LIFE

THROUGHOUT his entire life as bishop, preacher, teacher and writer, St. Augustine aimed at the highest goal of man, namely the attainment of happiness in God. God and happiness were to be attained by living a virtuous life here upon earth; it was to be a life of faith, hope, and charity. All his labors and efforts, his pastoral care, and writings are directed to reminding the faithful of God and to inculcating virtue. In doing so he developed a comprehensive theology and brought to its support the best philosophical accomplishments of the human mind.

The contents of the voluminous and manifold works of St. Augustine are intended to exercise an influence upon the two faculties of man, his intellect and his will. They purpose to stimulate and move the will, yet they also enlighten the intellect. Ever since the rise of Scholasticism, whose method and system have been principally didactic and illuminative, the influence of St. Augustine upon the mind is taken for granted. The medieval mind was molded on his theological and ascetical teaching. However, investigators of the various phases of his thought point to the other element of his theology and philosophy which affects the will. They conclusively show how his thought is directed toward moral and affective purposes;<sup>1</sup> how it is pervaded with ethics and so-called moralism;<sup>2</sup> how it is permeated with religion and the love of God.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> F. A. Cayré, *Le sources de l'amour divin. La divine présence d'après Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1933), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> B. Świtalski, *Neoplatonism and the Ethics of St. Augustine* (New York: 1946), p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the very title of the work by J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei. A Study of the Religion of St. Augustine* (London: 1947). E.g., Preface, p. VI: "Augustine's

While in his works there is much warmth for the heart, there is also much light for the understanding. Appealing to the affective nature of man Augustine at the same time undertakes to develop, elucidate, and defend the doctrine in which ethics and morality, religion and charity are rooted. The affective and moral factors do not hang in the air, but emanate as a natural sequence from solidly founded doctrinal elements. St. Augustine evidences, more perhaps than any other Father, the inseparability of theology and morality, of belief and practice, of dogma and life in Christian religion.<sup>4</sup>

We thus find in the writings of the great African Bishop that theology, philosophy, morality or ethics, and spirituality are blended appealingly into a harmonious and integrated whole. This is the reason why his works became an inexhaustible and indispensable patristic fund equally of doctrine, moral principles, and spirituality. The theologian, the philosopher, the moralist, the ascetical and mystical writer of the scholastic and post-scholastic periods were all able to draw from this universal source of thought that which suited them.

In order to illustrate the difference of doctrinal presentation we need only compare the writings of this luminary of the Western world with the works of the many Scholastics upon whom St. Augustine has exerted such powerful influence by his writings. We shall limit our consideration to the doctrine of the presence of God, which we have been studying in St. Augustine. The Scholastics proposed the whole body of doctrine on the presence of God in a systematic and well defined presentation, with much speculation and not a little consideration of the difficulties which surround the doctrine. Their approach to this doctrine is direct, systematic, and philosophical, in accordance with the pattern and method established over a long period of time. They had at their disposal a technical vocabulary and phraseology. Their aims, for the most part, were intellectual, as would be expected from pro-

Platonism is manifested in the centrality for his religion of *amor Dei*—the love of God which appears in men as the pursuit of eternal values and the delight in whatsoever things are lovely.”

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the article by Portalié, “Augustin” in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (Paris: 1909), I, 2432.

fessional teachers.<sup>5</sup> That the doctrine of the presence of God should have some influence in moving the will or in bringing about some good is not, at least for the most part, the direct or chief concern of the scholastic theologian. He aimed predominantly at reaching the understanding, defining terms, making divisions and subdivisions, presenting an elucidation of doctrine, proving and proposing a solution of difficulties.

St. Augustine's works are of a more practical character intended more directly for life than for knowledge. While the Scholastic wrote as a university professor and controversialist against other teachers, St. Augustine wrote as a Bishop, in virtue of his pastoral office in the Church. The Scholastic wrote because the lecture hall demanded that he impart his knowledge; St. Augustine wrote because various practical occasions demanded that he instruct and exhort his flock or other inquirers. Hence, his doctrine must be pieced together and integrated from pronouncements made on many and diverse occasions. The doctrine does not always lie on the surface, especially in its fullness and import; it must be arrived at and reconstructed, and made to fit into the integrity of his theologico-philosophical body of doctrine.

There are writings, such as those against the Manicheans, Donatists, and Pelagians, in which St. Augustine directly combats the errors of the times. In these his doctrinal thought is direct and more concentrated, the historical course of the doctrine more diligently investigated, the mode of argumentation more carefully developed, and even the philosophical background painstakingly probed. The same may be said of those treatises which he has written on particular doctrinal problems or as answers to enquiries concerning matters of doctrine. Usually in such cases St. Augustine delves into doctrinal matters in question with a concentration of mind, with a perspicacity of exposition, with a comprehension of the problems involved that would do credit to the great theologians of the scholastic period.

St. Augustine is a Father and presents his doctrine and exhortations in the way the Fathers do. They had no special method of

<sup>5</sup> Cf. P. Rousselot, *The Intellectualism of St. Thomas* (New York: 1935), p. 21.

their own, no rigorously scientific definitions, no iron-clad terms to express their doctrine. The Scholastics of the golden age possessed a specific method of presentation, a multitude of definitions, and a vast technical terminology. This apparatus contributed to the scholastic conciseness of thought and expression. It was an effect of, but also a boon to the development of theology and philosophy. Nor do we find in St. Augustine the clear-cut distinction between the domain of philosophy and theology as we do in the writings of the best Schoolmen. Scholasticism brought in its wake a more rigidly intellectualistic mentality. While the Scholastics were intent upon shedding light, the Fathers, and particularly St. Augustine, aimed at spreading warmth. These characteristics of the patristic and scholastic ages are symbolized appositely by Christian art in their two greatest representatives when it presents St. Thomas with a radiant sun on his chest, while it portrays St. Augustine with a heart in his right hand.

In regard to the subject of the divine presence, it was a fortunate circumstance that this doctrine was directly brought to the attention of St. Augustine by the inquiring Dardanus. In consequence, an *ex professo* study of this question is made by Augustine. In the course of this treatment emphatic statements and restatements are made, which do not allow us to mistake the mind of the author. Varied and abundant illustrations and comparisons are provided to make a difficult matter accessible to every mind. In his exegetical treatises, sermons, and elsewhere St. Augustine casually refers to the doctrine of the divine presence, but here he allows himself the time and takes the pains to investigate and treat the matter directly and thoroughly. That is why in his *Retractationes*, he refers to this letter to Dardanus as a treatise.<sup>6</sup> Indeed it is a true treatise, written in the style and form of the times, adapted to the understanding of the inquirer and yet containing basically all the questions and problems that would satisfy the demands of an exacting scholastic theologian.

But otherwise throughout his works it is rather the exploitation of this doctrine of the presence of God for the welfare of the soul that primarily interests St. Augustine. It is true that his moralizing

<sup>6</sup> Cf. B. Altaner, "Augustine's Preservation of his own Writings," *Theological Studies* IX (1948), 600-601.



and spiritualizing exhortations and instructions referring to the divine omnipresence are hardly ever devoid of some explanation and development. It is characteristic of the mind of St. Augustine that the theoretical and speculative doctrine can always be detected in the background of his practical teaching. The African Doctor was not only a great teacher of Christian doctrine, but also a first-rate master of spiritual life. He guides not only the mind in its search for the truth of God but also the whole soul in its search for God Himself.

In consequence St. Augustine has exerted a powerful influence in the remainder of the patristic age and in the scholastic period not only upon doctrine, such as dogmatic, moral, and biblical theology, but also upon the spiritual life of these centuries. In due time much of his spiritual heritage found its way into scientific treatises on ascetical and mystical theology. He is the originator of a trend of spirituality which can be recognized as Augustinian among the several types extant in the Middle Ages. His doctrine and thoughts on spirituality entered into the formation of many schools of spirituality, were adopted by spiritual writers and preachers, became a part of many a religious community, enriched the hearts and minds of the faithful, and guided individuals in their pious progress towards perfection.

Part and parcel of this spirituality is St. Augustine's conspicuous doctrine on the presence of God in the universe, in man and in everything, and especially the practical application of it to the daily life of a Christian. The consciousness of the presence of God that has imbedded itself so deeply in our spiritual life and plays so important a role in our asceticism is, in a great part, one of the contributions of the Bishop of Hippo to our Christian heritage. No doubt, the Fathers before St. Augustine contributed their share to the doctrine of the presence of God, but he as bishop, model-preacher, and influential writer taught and stressed this truth to the people and inquirers, to the extent that it entered into the warp and woof of Christian thought, consciousness, and feeling.

St. Augustine's doctrine on the presence of God and its inculcation as a spiritual factor in the life of man are only one phase of his entire teaching about God. The lofty portrayal and commendation of this divine attribute are proportionate to the sublimity and

earnestness of the Bishop's concept of God. God, to St. Augustine, is not something merely abstract and impersonal; not the mere concept of being, distant from the domain of reality; nor is it something that is to be identified with the reality of the universe. His God is a personal, living, and real Being. He is Being itself, subsisting Being, the Being of all beings. He absolutely *is*. Thus God is a Being of absolute perfection so that whatever other perfection exists in the universe, in other beings, is a participation of His perfection.

Just as the essence of God is infinite and perfect, so too the attributes of God, which are one with His essence, are infinite and perfect. God must be so present as not to be subject to the limitations of time and place. The universe is subject to the intervals of time: there is a past, present, and future for it. God is eternal: He simultaneously embraces the past, the present, and the future. Man is circumscribed by place; the soul is confined to the body. God is not circumscribed by any part of the universe, nor is He encompassed by the whole universe. He is simply incircumscribable. Moreover, His mode of presence is most perfect. Being present in the universe He is wholly everywhere, that is, in the entire universe, but also wholly in every part of any place, person, or thing.

There are various ways of being present. The mode or perfection of presence depends upon the grade or perfection of being. Presence is an attribute of being, and must be found in some degree of perfection in every being. The more perfect the being the more perfect the presence. Thus St. Augustine develops simultaneously the metaphysics of being with the modes of presence. There are three modes of presence corresponding to the three grades of beings. Material beings constitute the lowest grade: they have a circumscriptive mode of presence. They are circumscribed by the space they occupy so that they are wholly in the whole place, and each part of the material being occupies the corresponding part of the place occupied. Mutable spiritual substances, such as the soul, constitute a superior grade of beings and possess a higher mode of presence. They occupy a whole place, i.e., the soul occupies the body, but in such a manner as to be entire in the whole body and entire in each part of that body. God, the immutable

and supreme Spirit, has no delimitations to His presence but is wholly everywhere.

To say that God is everywhere present in His entirety may become a hackneyed expression and not convey the fullness of its import. St. Augustine frequently undertakes to describe it concretely and portray it graphically in order to impress us with the momentousness of the divine presence. God is present in heaven and on earth. If we consider heaven as the proper abode of God, it is there that He will be attained in the beatific vision by the blessed. If we consider heaven as the upper physical regions, then He is present in the sun, the moon, the stars, the most distant planets. He is present everywhere on earth, in the lower regions, and even in hell. Just as His essence and power penetrate the heavenly bodies, so they also pervade our earth and all its elements—the soil, the air, the water, the fire. By His spiritual substance He is diffused through all beings, whether rational, sensitive, or vegetative. He is in angel, satan, man, animal, tree, flower, plant, and mineral. He is on the peaks of the highest mountains, He abides in the lowest valleys.

For St. Augustine the presence of God in the universe is not so much an abidance as it is an activity. The divine presence is identified or associated with works that are proper to God. The existence of a well-ordered universe, constituted of a multitude, complexity, and variety of beings, is a proof of the creative and omnipotent power of God. Whenever and wherever creation takes place, there too God is present. Whenever and wherever the divine power is exercised God will be there exercising it, nor will He be separated from it and in some distant place. And thus in the very act of the creation of all things God was present to all incipient beings.

The presence of God is associated not only with the very act of creation, but also with the preservation of created beings. Just as creation by God is a necessary act for coming into existence, so also conservation by God is a necessary work for the continuation in existence of created beings. The conservative power is a continuation of the creative act, and both can be considered as one, so far as the existence of beings is concerned. Just as the creating God, so also the preserving God is present to the universe that He

upholds and maintains in existence. To create and to preserve in existence means for God to be present in those beings when they begin to be and as long as they continue to be.

By the same token the mysterious power of God is to be discerned in the movement and changes, growth and development that obtrude themselves upon the eye and the mind of one contemplating the universe. Directly or indirectly God is the cause why the planets move regularly in their orbits, why new genera and species arise from those originally created,<sup>7</sup> why vegetative and sentient life grows, why the potentialities latent in the universe develop according to a preordained plan. God too moves the rational powers of man to their intended activities: in a mysterious way, He is also the cause of man's knowing and willing. The movement imparted by God to creatures is not violent so as to be opposed to their nature, but gentle, so that it is in accordance with their nature. Greater operativeness on the part of God is necessary to keep man in existence and operation, hence He is said to be nearer to man than to the other creatures of the universe. "In Him we live, and move, and are."<sup>8</sup>

St. Augustine not only studies God in His creative, conservative, motive, and cooperative activity concerning the universe, but he also contemplates Him in the order and harmony, the stability and purposefulness of the universe. In this consideration the mind is focused not so much upon the operations of God as upon the beauty of God's work as such. For the Bishop of Hippo the universe is a great book, which has not been written with ink. No matter in what direction we look, whether above or below, we shall discover the Maker of the universe. Heaven and earth shout to us that God made them. No louder voice can be asked than that. "Behold the things that He made, He governs and maintains: He Himself, who made them, fills them with His presence."<sup>9</sup>

The universe is a palpable manifestation of the power, wisdom, and beauty of God. On this account, St. Augustine maintains that the author of nature cannot be entirely unknown to men who make

<sup>7</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, VI, 6, 10 (PL 34, 343; CSEL 28, 1, 177): "invisibiliter, potentialiter, causaliter, quomodo fiunt futura non facta." Cf. P. L. Pera, *La creazione simultanea et virtuale secondo S. Agostino* (Fuenze: 1928), I, 3.

<sup>8</sup> Acts 17:28.

<sup>9</sup> *Sermo* (Mai 126, 6), *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (Romae: 1930), I, 360.



proper use of their reason. Such is the power of the true Godhead revealed in creation that He cannot be altogether hidden from rational creatures. There are exceptional cases where human nature is depraved and cannot elevate itself above the visible and palpable world to acknowledge the Maker of nature. But the human race as a whole recognizes a Supreme Being as the creator of the universe and as the cause of its order.<sup>10</sup> For man who makes use of his reason rightly and seeks God it should not be difficult to find Him, "for He who made us is more nigh to us than are the many things that He has made."<sup>11</sup>

Man must take care not to cling to the beauty of the universe or earthly creatures as if they were a goal in themselves. The order intended by God would be perverted if the mind and heart of man rested and tried to find satiation in finite creatures. The urge for happiness in the heart of man can be satiated only by the Un-created which lies beyond the universe. Consequently, nature with its creatures must be a stepping-stone to an infinite, all satiating-object which is God himself.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God! God, then, has promised to show himself to us. Let us reflect on what that beauty of His must be! He made all these beautiful things that you see and love. If they are beautiful, then what must He be! If they are great, how great must He be! From a consideration, then, of these things which we love here, let us rather yearn for Him, and, despising these other things, let us love Him!<sup>12</sup>

The presence of God is a truth which must be of the greatest concern to man who as a rational creature is destined for eternal happiness. Such happiness consists in attaining God by an intellectual vision. The abiding thought in man that God is near us, around us, within us, ever-present to us is helpful and profitable in directing our thoughts and actions toward the ultimate possession of God. Man must be impressed with the reality of the divine presence. Like all other beings, God penetrates the being of man as light shines through a translucent object, yet in such a manner that countless other objects are receptive of that light, but do not

<sup>10</sup> *In Io. Ev.*, tr. 106, 4 (PL 35, 1910).

<sup>11</sup> *De Gen. ad lit.*, V, 16, 34 (PL 34, 333; CSEL 28, 159).

<sup>12</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 84, 9 (PL 37, 1075).

exhaust or diminish it. His presence is so intimate and imperative to man that God is said to be more present to us than we are to ourselves. We cannot be without the presence and power of Him who is so operative in us that He sustains our being in existence; otherwise we should turn to the nothingness out of which we were made.

The doctrine of the divine presence can be an aid, a consolation, an incentive, but also a warning, a condemnation. It will have a different meaning for the virtuous than it will for the sinner. A realization of the divine presence in one who is fully cognizant of its import must be an incentive to divine worship and thanksgiving. Since the presence of God is inseparably associated with such basic truths as the creation of man, his conservation in existence, and a co-operation of God with every movement and operation of man, it involves the most fundamental reasons for worship, thanksgiving, and even for offering sacrifice. An absorbing and abiding awareness that God is ever-present is a potent means to self-sanctification. Under its influence man is spurred on to do good, to undertake works of mortification, to make sacrifices, to resist temptation, and to avoid evil. The consciousness of the presence of God is an elevating factor for prayer and good deeds.

When the doctrine of the divine presence becomes a permanent and indispensable part of our spiritual life, it will bring about in the soul a healthy atmosphere of supernatural security and resignation. True evil will not befall those who live in an absorbing conviction that God is around and in them; that the divine substance and power pervade them. In any case, if what are considered earthly evils become their lot, they are more likely to sustain them with equanimity than those whose God is distant to them.

Much more will this be the case with regard to those who realize that God is in them not only as creator, conservator, and prime mover, but also as inhabiting, elevating them to a supernatural plane, and as a friend. The latter consideration involves the former, but the former can exist without the latter. The presence through creation and conservation belongs to the natural order of things, and presupposing that God has ordained to create, the presence of God of necessity follows upon creation. The presence through inhabitation and friendship pertains to the order of grace, and is a

gratuitous gift of God. This familiar presence of God, though inestimably more precious than the natural presence of God, was not the subject of this work. In spiritual life, however, they go hand in hand toward sanctifying man.

In reference to the consciousness of the presence of God the benefits, just described as accruing to the virtuous, are either explicitly or implicitly contained in the writings of the Fathers and of St. Augustine. They are more emphatic when they make use of this same doctrine in reference to sinners. The doctrine of the presence of God is traditionally used in the writings of the Fathers as a deterrent against sin. Likewise St. Augustine is quick and eloquent in employing the doctrine of the ubiquitous presence of God as a formidable weapon against the sinner.

No matter how much we try, we cannot make ourselves remote from Him, who is everywhere altogether present. We cannot flee or escape from Him who is around and within our very selves. For the sinner He is a terrible judge from whom we cannot abscond, for He presides by His presence in all places at the same time. In this the all-present judge differs from human judges who are present in a particular place, and pass their sentence upon the guilty one who is likewise usually present before them. Not so God. He is everywhere and all of us are always before Him. Let us quote one example of the practical application of this doctrine from the Saint's writings:

God is the judge of your iniquities. If He is God, He is everywhere present. Whither wilt thou betake thyself from the eyes of God, that thou mayest speak in some part where He does not hear? If God judges from the east, go to the west, and say whatever you wish against God; if He judges from the west, go to the east, and speak there; if from the wilderness or mountains, go into midst of the people, where thou wilt murmur to thyself. He judges from no place who is everywhere hidden, everywhere public; whom no one can know as He is, and whom no one is permitted to ignore.<sup>13</sup>

Man can and does attain God to some extent in this life by knowledge and love. We have already seen what a pivotal position in psychology is assigned by St. Augustine to knowledge which is concerned with temporal and mutable things on the one hand,

<sup>13</sup> *Enar. in Ps.* 74, 9 (PL 36, 952).

and to wisdom which reaches out for eternal and immutable things on the other hand. Sapiential knowledge, true philosophy lays hold of the essences of beings, of exemplary ideas, and thus is directed toward the very essence of God, the First Cause and the ultimate end of man. Wisdom, therefore, strives to attain God, as much as that is possible here upon earth, and in Him a foretaste of future, perfect happiness.

If so, the awareness of the ever-present inbeing of the eternal and immutable God in the universe, and in every being, and particularly in man should constitute a fundamental counterpart to the philosophy of wisdom. Wisdom that is in quest of the immutable, eternal, and necessary Being goes hand in hand with a deep consciousness of the religious soul that God exists and is present everywhere. As the intellect ascends by cognitive processes or by intuition to the sphere of ideas that converge in the essence of God and are identifiable with Him, man is made to realize that God pervades man's own very being by His substance and power.

It is also a practical characteristic of wisdom to recognize the Creator in the universe and in no way to confuse Him with it. Such spiritual discernment determines the relative value of things and must have an influence upon morality and the way of life. If creatures become for man an end in themselves, then the sole beatifying object, God, is neglected, forgotten, and never attained. Thus wisdom is associated with a certain awareness of the divine presence in the universe and with a cognizance of the difference between the Creator and creature.

True wisdom means to subordinate things created to their creator; distinguishing carefully the building and the builder, the work and its artificer. A person who confuses the artificer and his handiwork understands neither the artificer nor his art; whereas one who realizes the difference between them is filled with true wisdom.<sup>14</sup>

Not only the intellect but also the will must be poised toward God. The most basic act of the will is love. Love affects all the actions proceeding from the will. Love in its noblest meaning is charity. It brings unity into the aspirations and actions of man; it animates all virtues by giving value to them. Charity is the love of

<sup>14</sup> *Sermo* 252, 10 (PL 38, 1177-8).



God and neighbor. "I define charity," says St. Augustine, "as a motion of the soul whose purpose is to enjoy God for His own sake and one's self and one's neighbor for the sake of God."<sup>15</sup>

God is the supreme object of our love, and the measure of every other true love. Ordinately we can love only that greater than which there is nothing. If we, therefore, love some lower object in preference to God or equally with Him, then we do not know how to love ourselves.<sup>16</sup> This love of God urges the lover to a deeper knowledge of God. And thus there is a reciprocity between knowledge and love, love deepening understanding, and understanding fostering love.<sup>17</sup>

Charity has a bearing upon the practical application of the doctrine of the divine omnipresence. While creation and conservation remind us of the presence of God which is common to all creatures, charity is a token of the presence of God by inhabitation. It is an oft-repeated and solemn doctrine of St. Augustine that charity comes from God and that it is diffused in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.<sup>18</sup> In turn, charity is motion toward God,<sup>19</sup> and it effects a union with God. In the possession of God is the peace and repose of the human will.<sup>20</sup>

We go to God not by walking but by loving Him. We shall understand and appreciate His greatness and goodness the more we go to Him. He will also be more present to us the purer is the love with which we go to Him. Augustine reminds us that God is not extended over, or contained in, corporeal spaces. To Him, therefore, who is everywhere present and everywhere in His entirety, we do not go by feet, but by virtuous actions. Our actions, however, must be judged not by that which we know but by that

<sup>15</sup> *De doct. christ.*, III, 10, 16 (PL 34, 72); tr. by J. J. Gavigan in *Fathers of the Church*, Writings of St. Augustine (New York: 1947), IV, 130.

<sup>16</sup> *Ep.* 155, 4, 13 (PL 33, 672; CSEL 44, 443).

<sup>17</sup> C. Boyer, *L'idée de vérité dans la philosophie de Saint Augustin* (2me ed.; Paris: 1940), p. 284.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. P. Platz, *Der Römerbrief in der Gnadenlehre Augustins* (Würzburg: 1937), pp. 136-37, where the author points out that the passage of the Epistle to the Romans, 5:5: "the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us," is quoted over 150 times.

<sup>19</sup> *Confess.*, XIII, 9, 10 (PL 32, 849): "pondus meum amor meus."

<sup>20</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 848: "In dono tuo requiescimus, ibi te fruimur: Requies nostra, locus noster. Amor illuc attollit nos."

which we love. Good or evil actions are made by good or bad love.<sup>21</sup>

The presence of God is not only an incontestable and important phase of St. Augustine's doctrine on God, but it is also a vital and impressive feature of his own personal religion. There is ample evidence in his writings of a keen feeling and deep consciousness of the ever-presence of God in all creation—in the universe, in man, particularly in Augustine himself. He zealously and eloquently proclaims to others, what he himself religiously experiences in his own soul. It is true that the awareness of God's presence is frequently associated with that special and familiar presence of God resulting from the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the just.<sup>22</sup> But likewise frequently it is a sensitiveness to that divine presence which is natural and common to all beings, animate and inanimate. Man alone, however, of all terrestrial creatures can acknowledge it by his rational nature.

Any one who carefully reads his *Confessions* must be impressed by Augustine's awareness of, and sensitiveness to, the divine inbeing and activity in his own self. When, as it were, forgetting himself, he seeks and calls upon God to come to him, then upon second thought, he rebukes himself and apologizes for trying to draw God to his own inner self from elsewhere when He is always there.<sup>23</sup> It would naturally be expected that such a work as the *Confessions* would bring to the foreground such divine attributes as God's presence and operations in man, both in the natural and supernatural order. Although it is hardly possible to designate a plan, a unifying theme,<sup>24</sup> the *Confessions* is a

<sup>21</sup> *Ep.* 155, 4, 13 (PL 33, 672; CSEL 44, 443).

<sup>22</sup> F. Cayré, *Les sources de l'amour divin: la divine présence d'après Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1933), p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> *Confess.* I, ch. 2 and 3 (PL 32, 661-62; ed. M. Skutella, 2-3).

<sup>24</sup> This is evident from the fact that recent authors disagree in assigning a unifying topic. For some it lies in the sacrifice of praises, thus J. Stiglmayr, "Das Werk der augustinischen Konfessionen mit einem Opfergelübde besiegelt," *Zeits. für Aszese und Mystik*, V (1930), 234-45; *id.*, "Zum Aufbau der Confessiones des hl. Augustin," *Scholastik*, VII (1932), 386-403. For others the three parts of the *Confessions* correspond to Augustine's past, present, and future. P. L. Landsberg, "La conversion de s. Augustin," *La vie spirituelle*, XLVIII (1936), suppl., 32; J. M. Blondel, *Les conversions de s. Augustin* (Paris: 1950), p. 17. Sr. M. Monica Wagner holds that edification is the unifying principle of the *Confessions*; "Plan in the Confessions of St. Augustine," *Philological Quarterly* XXIII (1944), 1-23. M. Verheijen sees it in the divine

"sacrifice of praises," praises of divine grace, and an expression of thanksgiving to God.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, there is a blending of Augustine's personal history with theological themes, the emphasis being on the latter. The narrative is unmistakably theocentric: it bears witness to the intervention of God in matters pertaining to the life of St. Augustine.<sup>26</sup> Finally, it serves to raise the heart and mind of his readers to God—and how many generations of mankind has already read them—and to encourage those who are in a similar state of habitual sin to seek the mercy of God.<sup>27</sup>

The underlying thought in the doctrine of the divine omnipresence is God's absolute independence and man's total dependence on the Supreme Being. God needs no beings, needs not man nor place in order to exist; man, however, if created, needs God for his existence. God exists by necessity and immutably; man exists by the will of God and mutably. The dependence upon the primary and necessary cause is not only in beginning to be, but also in continuing to be. It is a dependence which never ceases, because God never ceases to be God and the creature never ceases to be a creature.

This truth the Bishop of Hippo emphatically applies to himself in his inimitable style and language which lose much of their power in translation: "If I shall not remain in Him (God), nor will I be able to remain in myself."<sup>28</sup> In corroboration of this assertion Augustine adduces a passage referring to wisdom and found

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mercy coming to the succour of human misery; *Eloquentia pedisequa, observations sur le style des Confessions de saint Augustin* (Nimeque: 1949), p. 50; H. I. Marrou; *S. Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*, II (Paris: 1949), p. 666, n. 2; V. J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee, Wis.: 1946), p. 147 considers the revelation of the efficacy of the divine grace in Augustine's own life as the principal purpose of the work.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. H. Boemer, "Die Lobpreisungen des Augustinus," *Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift*, XXVI (1915), 419-38; 487-512. P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris: 1950), pp. 14 ff.; J. F. Harvey, *Moral Theology of the Confessions of St. Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: 1951), p. XVIII.

<sup>26</sup> G. Kowalski, "Est-ce qu' Augustin se confesse dans ses Confessions?" *Eos*, XXX (1927), 379-400; *id.*, "De eis quae in Augustini Confessionibus non sint confessoria," *Collectanea Theologica*, XI (1930), 399-413; S. J. Grabowski, "St Augustine and the Presence of God," *Theological Studies*, XIII (1952), 336.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. A. Vega, *Obras de San Agustin* (Madrid: 1946), 298.

<sup>28</sup> *Confess.*, VII, 11, 17 (PL 32, 742; ed. M. Skutella, 141): "Si non manebo in illo, nec in me potero."

in the Book of Wisdom but predicates it of God: "and remaining in Himself the same, He reneweth all things."<sup>29</sup> This is one of the most fundamental principles of his philosophy and theology that any finite and contingent being would and could not exist unless God, the absolute and necessary Being, were the cause of its origin and preservation by His active and pervasive presence. "He made these souls, nor is He far off. For He did not make them, and so depart, but they are of Him and in Him."<sup>30</sup>

Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new!  
Too late I loved Thee, and behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad,  
and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunging amid those fair  
forms, which Thou has made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with  
Thee, which unless they were in Thee, were not at all.<sup>31</sup>

God is for St. Augustine a tremendous and overpowering reality. In comparison with this reality and Being of beings, all created beings are faint shadows and can be said not to be. He who is fullness of perfection really and truly is. Corresponding to his sublime conception and realization of an all-perfect Being is the pervading consciousness of the all-embracing, all-sustaining, all-penetrating presence of God. The divine Being is so real and present to Augustine's mind that at times he seems almost to pierce the veil which separates the finite from the Infinite, and to grasp Him whose throne is inaccessible to the mind of mortal man.<sup>32</sup> It is in this sense that Paulinus, seeking theological and exegetical information, writes in a letter to Augustine: "I have asked you who sees as it were through God."<sup>33</sup>

St. Augustine clearly states that Moses and St. Paul were accorded immediate visions of God in this life.<sup>34</sup> St. Thomas like-

<sup>29</sup> Wisd. 7:27: "Ille autem in se manens innovat omnia."

<sup>30</sup> *Confess.*, IV, 12, 18 (PL 32, 701; ed. M. Skutella, 67); tr. by E. B. Pusey (London: 1945), p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> *Confess.*, X, 27, 38 (PL 32, 795; ed. M. Skutella, 237); tr. *op. cit.*, p. 227.

<sup>32</sup> H. Pope, *St. Augustine of Hippo* (Westminster, Md.: 1949), pp. 251-52: "we can see how he (Augustine) had penetrated into the mysteries of the Godhead, has become almost 'comprehensor,' and not simply 'viator.'"

<sup>33</sup> *Ep.*, 121, 3, 14 (PL 33, 468; CSEL 34, 2, 736): "Te, qui vides quasi Deum, interrogavi."

<sup>34</sup> *De videndo Deo, seu Ep.* 147, 13, 31-32 (PL 33, 610-11); *De Gen. ad lit.*, XII, 55-56 (PL 34, 477-78); cf. J. Maréchal, *Etudes sur la psychologie des mystiques* (Bruxelles-Paris: 1937), II, 168 ff.



wise explains the episodes in which Moses and St. Paul are involved as referring to an intuition of God himself. This Aquinas does when he speaks of the vision of God by essence,<sup>35</sup> of ecstasy,<sup>36</sup> and of the summit of contemplative life.<sup>37</sup> Supported by such eminent authority some writers on mystical theology allow to some select souls at the summit of their contemplation a privilege of a glimpse at the essence of God.<sup>38</sup>

St. Augustine does not ascribe to himself any such privilege, and yet he is named by a mystical writer the prince of mystics, as uniting in himself "the two elements of mystical experience, viz., the most penetrating intellectual vision into things divine, and a love of God that was a consuming passion. He shines as the sun in the firmament, shedding forth at once light and heat in the luster of his intellect and the warmth of his religious emotion."<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Summa theol.*, Ia, q. 12, a. 11 ad. 2; cf. IV *Sent.*, d. 49, q. 2, a. 7; *Verit.*, q. 10, a. 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Summa theol.*, IIa-IIae, q. 175, a. 3-5; cf. *Verit.*, q. 13, a. 2-5.

<sup>37</sup> *Summa theol.*, IIa-IIae, q. 180, a. 5; cf. Maréchal, *loc. cit.*, 199 ff.

<sup>38</sup> J. de Guibert, *Theologia Spiritualis Ascetica et Mystica* (3 ed., Romae: 1946), p. 353.

<sup>39</sup> E. C. Butler, *Western Mysticism: the Teaching of St. Augustine, Gregory and Bernard on Contemplation and the Contemplative Life* (London: 1927), p. 24.



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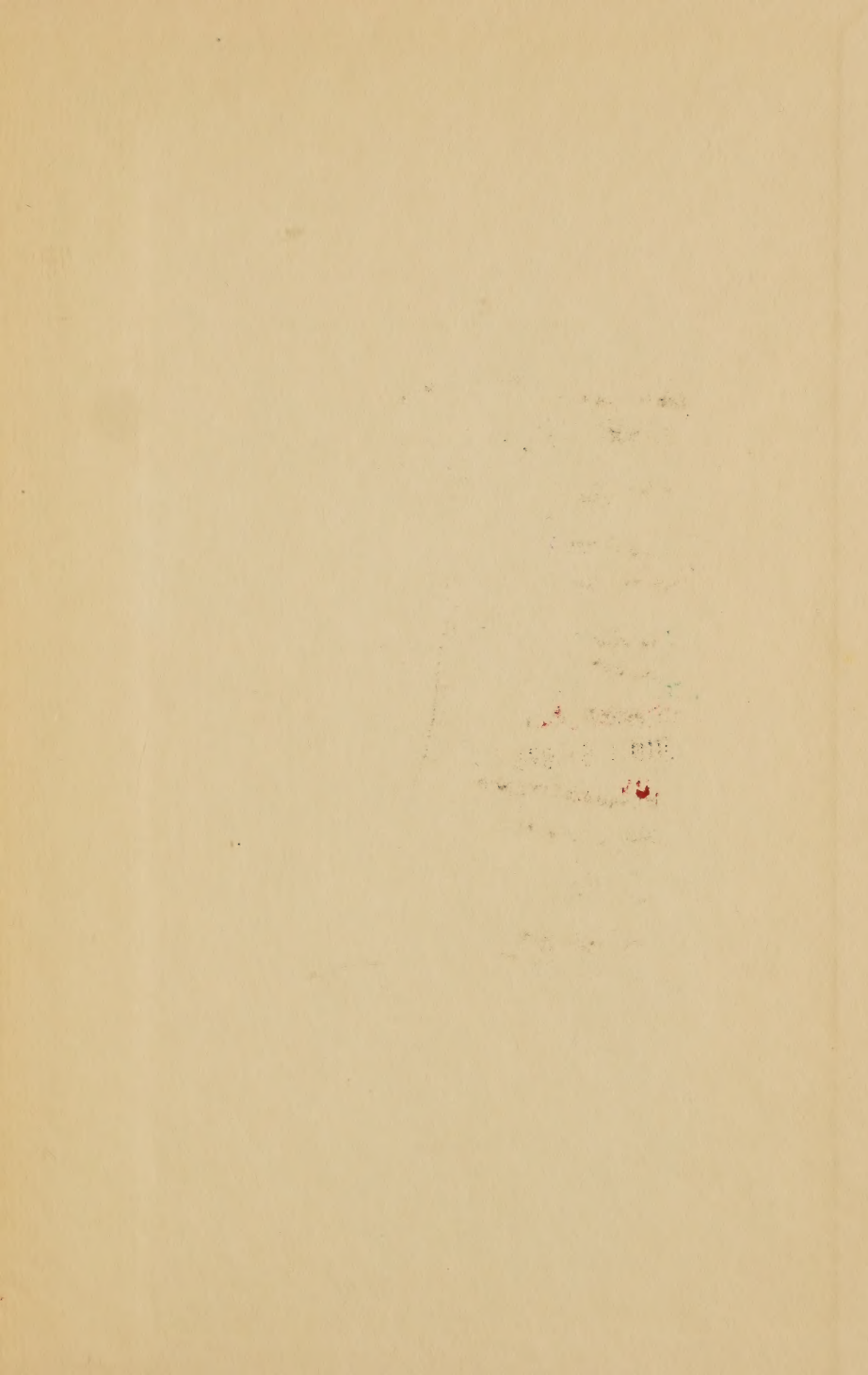




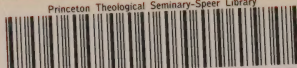


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